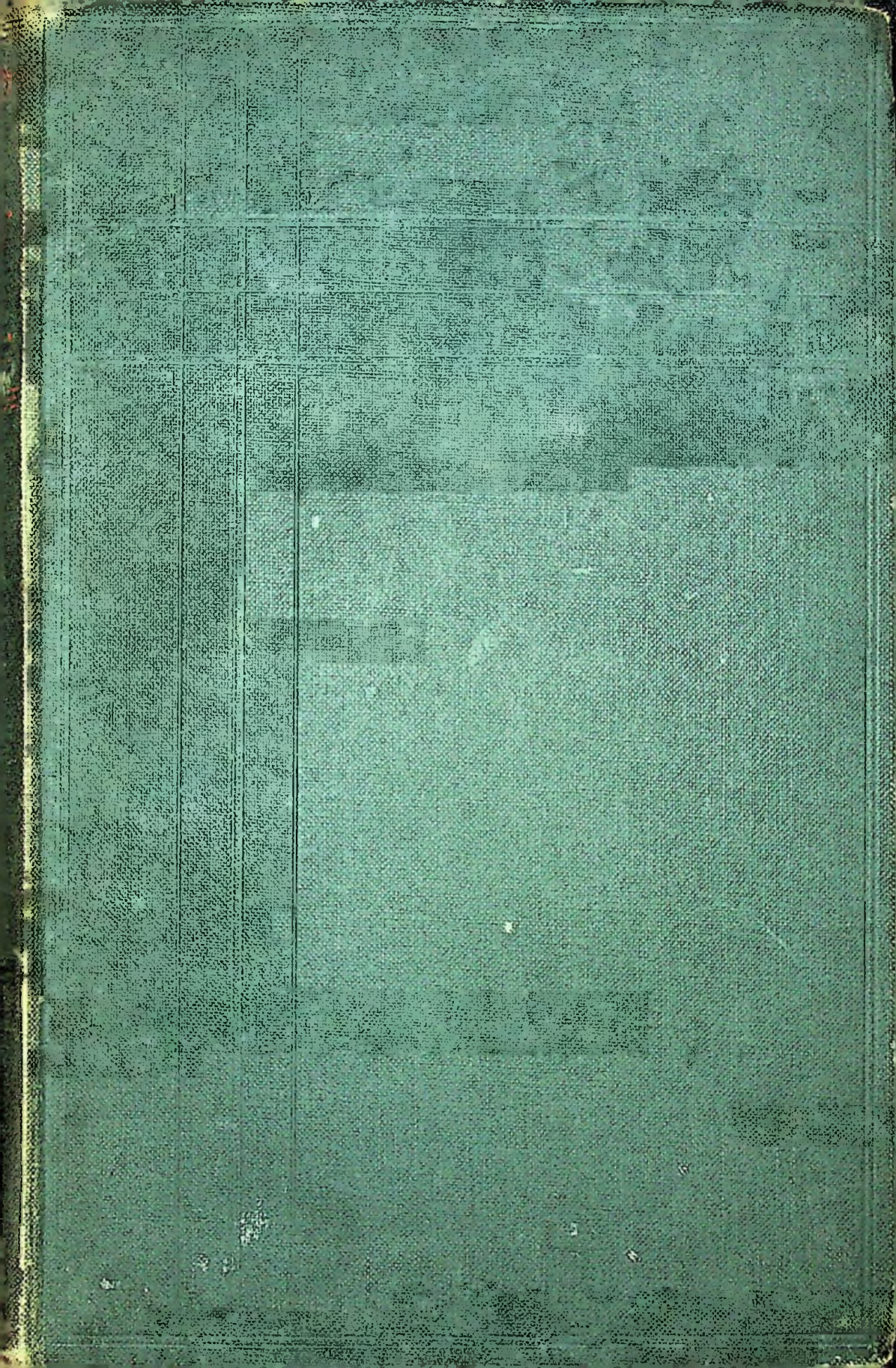






W. E. H. L.





BEHIND THE NAZI FRONT

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JOHN MCCUTCHEON RALEIGH (SECOND FROM RIGHT) TALKS WITH HITLER  
This photograph was taken on a Warsaw airfield a few days after the Polish city fell. The man in uniform next to Hitler is Professor Karl Doerner, Foreign Press Chief.



# BEHIND THE NAZI FRONT

*By*  
JOHN McCUTCHEON RALEIGH

*With a Foreword by*  
F. A. VOIGT



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TO  
MY MOTHER





## NOTE

*THE* author's thanks are due to *The Saturday Evening Post*, *The Reader's Digest*, and the *Daily Mail* for the use of passages in this book reprinted from those publications.



## FOREWORD

*I*N war-time there is always one question of deep and ineradicable interest, "What is it like on the other side?" Those of us who took part in the last war will remember the intense curiosity with which we examined everything that had belonged to the enemy, everything that showed how he lived. We would pick up a German steel helmet and compare it with ours. We would judge it too heavy, and, although it covered the neck, it did not, so we thought, provide better protection. We would handle German rifles and examine German trenches, dug-outs, and billets. I vividly remember the first evidence of the British blockade in the use of paper for sand-bags, bandages, and so on among the Germans, and in the delight which German prisoners showed over the white bread, the butter, and the jam that were served out to them.

As this war is more of a civilians' war than the last, our curiosity with regard to life among German civilians is all the greater. "What is it like to be in Berlin now?" is a question we are all asking—and asking in vain, for the most part, seeing that the evidence is so scanty, much scantier, indeed, than it was during the last war, when Germany was much more accessible than she is now, because she had more neutral neighbours. But the question remains one of burning interest and also of importance, for it is on the life which the ordinary man, woman, and child is able to lead that the outcome of the war largely depends. In the last war the German 'home front' collapsed as the result of the blockade and of defeat in the field. What is the condition of the German home front in the present war? The greater the hardships endured and the greater the despondency felt by the German civilian, the more hopefully can we anticipate another German collapse.

Mr Raleigh's book is, as far as I am aware, the first detailed, comprehensive, and honest account of life among German



civilians and soldiers in the present war. It is artlessly written, without any striving after effect—the work of a competent, accurate, straightforward reporter. I find it of absorbing interest. Every page bears the stamp of veracity. Those of us who have experienced the ‘Blitz’ will find Mr Raleigh’s opening chapter particularly fascinating. He leaves no doubt at all that Berliners cannot ‘take it’ as Londoners can : raids that never happened seem to have caused more hysteria in Berlin than the most destructive raids caused in London. The lesson that emerges from his book is that if we ‘stick it’ we shall win, that our home front will not be shaken as easily as the German home front. As for the battle front, the prospect is less hopeful. Mr Raleigh, who is altogether objective, although he is deeply sympathetic to the Allied cause, pays a high tribute to the morale of the German soldier.

But it is not his purpose to teach us, or anyone, a lesson, or to raise hopes or fears. He remains a reporter from beginning to end, leaving the reader to make his own generalizations. There is horror and strangeness in his book beyond the horror and strangeness that are part of all warfare. The brutality of the Germans in Poland, as witnessed by him, is particularly revolting. According to his account, the Germans at home in war-time appear much more emotional than we do, more inclined to hysteria. All who know them intimately will, I think, bear him out. There is much in the devotion to Hitler that must strike us as hysterical, though Mr Raleigh leaves us in no doubt as to the reality of that devotion. But his book must be left to speak for itself. It seems to me as important as it is interesting—a most valuable contribution to our knowledge of the most formidable foe our country ever had.

F. A. VOIGT.

## PREFACE

*I*N *Behind the Nazi Front* I have not attempted to characterize German actions either politically or with a full view of world events. These I gratefully leave to more capable hands.

Rather I have tried to chronicle personal experiences, observations, and opinions—this being, by the grace of God, not a newspaper story where such matters are frowned upon, but a true tale of the life of a newsman in totalitarian Germany at war.

May I express here admiration for those who still remain in Germany, sending the news by cable and radio? Perhaps some of their difficulties may be recognized from the pages of this volume.

They are trying to report accurately events in Hitlerland—a task that violently strains the nerves, too often impairs the health, and always holds the threat of official excommunication for their papers and networks should they dare to tell the whole story!

The future is clouded with dire possibilities. I sincerely hope that those still within the borders of the Third Reich, sending the news—remaining under conditions unjustly severe and oppressive—will not be left behind in any emergency.

J. M. R.

SHANGHAI,  
CHINA



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## CHAPTER I

### THE FUSE IS LIT

*THE* 'phone rang sharply in the hall of my Berlin *pension*. With only two hours' sleep behind me, I groaned at the disturbance. I had worked all night, getting home at five in the morning.

Every one had finally agreed that terms with Poland would be reached soon, that the danger of war had passed.

Some one pounded on my door. "Telephone, Herr Raleigh!"

"Yes, yes, I'm coming," I answered sleepily. In the hall I picked up the instrument, still in a daze of weariness.

"The Germans have marched into Poland. Early this morning—5.45 A.M. It's really war. Get down to the office quickly!"

As I was rushing back to my room the landlady timidly asked over my shoulder what the news was. She had two sons in the Army.

"War!" I said briefly. The full significance of what had occurred remained undigested in my mind. I dressed swiftly, automatically, and was soon in a taxi.

Berlin looked the same. Early lorries and delivery carts rattled through the streets. Workers trudged along, or waited for crowded street-cars. Every one seemed calm enough. They were not to know until Adolf Hitler spoke at the Reichstag that afternoon.

War!

It seemed utterly unbelievable. For days peace had hovered over Germany, Poland, the rest of Europe, always within grasp, never hopelessly flown. Hitler had not given in an inch. The Poles refused to send the special delegate demanded to discuss the settlements of the Corridor problems. Warsaw insisted it would send no special plenipotentiary. The threat of massed troops on both sides of the frontier

was not impressive. Troops had been massing in Europe at one border or another for months. Each time they were moved elsewhere when the crises ceased, when the beatings on the war drums stopped.

It was a case of crying "Wolf! Wolf!" too many times. No one thought that this new Nazi demand would lead to war. Somehow it would be settled. That was the universal cry from nearly all the correspondents, the American industrialists, the Embassy and Consulate. A few were doubtful. On September 1, 1939, the day Hitler's legions began hurling cold steel into the Corridor, the betting was ten to one among the correspondents in the Adlon bar that there would be no war—and there were no takers!

There had been days of wondering what the next diplomatic move from the Wilhelmstrasse was to be. Days of grudging admiration for what many named "Adolf's monstrous bluff." He would not dare go to war! He never had before, had always got what he demanded without recourse to arms! He had himself solemnly promised the people that Mars did not rule his future aims. Millions fervently believed him. All over Germany before September they were singing his praises because he had kept them out of war and still made Germany great again!

"Our Führer? War? Impossible! He has promised us; he is too clever! You will see—he will lead us past war, and get what we Germans deserve! The Corridor and Danzig!" This continual harangue was widespread, so monotonously repeated that its source was obvious. Propaganda! It was a certainty that every Nazi cell and *bloc* coached and trained its members to uphold the Führer's peace claims, to insist he would not resort to war. They believed it themselves. They were told to.

The whole thing would be straightened out in a few days. War? A few shells, a machine-gun or two, and everything would be settled!

So the wisecracks thought. Neville Henderson, the English Ambassador to Germany, had been flying back and forth between Berlin and London, making desperate efforts to settle matters. Press conferences assured correspondents that Ger-

many would not deviate an iota from Hitler's demands, but insisted that war was unlikely, very unlikely ! If the Pole would only stop his brutality and return the Corridor everything would be fine. So the reassurances went.

Then smoke was noticed coming out of the French Embassy chimneys. It was hot, late August. There could be no possible reason for a fire. I watched for a moment at the corner of Wilhelmstrasse and Unter den Linden. On the Dye Trust Building the pom-pom gun crews methodically went through a dummy practice. Tourists still swarmed in and out of the American Express Company's offices. People walked briskly along. The Linden was charming in the hot sun.

But the smoke ? There was more now. Suddenly it burst upon me. The French were burning their papers, documents that might fall into Nazi hands should they leave.

The Polish war was a day old. We were all waiting to see what the Allies would do. The smoke seemed symbolical. France would fight. I hurried back to the office.

Rumours spread everywhere. Göring had appointed a secret envoy who had already made several trips to London by plane to confer with Chamberlain and others in the British Government. The Air Marshal's messenger was supposed to be in London and was expected back in a few hours. The situation would soon straighten itself out ; peace would come quickly. Hitler's legions were already nearly to the original frontiers of Germany in the south, and the Corridor was practically taken with the exception of Hela, the Westerplatte, Gdynia, and a few isolated points.

The events of the last twenty-four hours seemed incredible. I had been working steadily ever since the outbreak of hostilities in the east, yet I was not tired. No one was, though few had had more than snatched naps occasionally.

Waiting for the final word on what England and France would do, I reviewed the momentous happenings of the past several days. The surprise of the German-Russian trade pact ; the sudden filling of the newspapers with five times as many atrocity stories in Poland ; the undeclared Hitler *Blitzkrieg* that had begun was startlingly well under way ; the exchange

of Notes between the German Chancellery and the Allied Ambassadors ; the departure of the English and French correspondents . . .

Then the first chill of the sirens that turned Berlin into inky blackness for the duration of the war. Though the newspapers and radios announced that a general blackout would start on the night of September 1, and that sirens would be the signal plunging the Nazi capital into the *Verdunklung*, the people were frightened.

Earlier in August Berlin had had one practice blackout lasting several days. When the sirens began to shriek and howl windows were closed, dark paper covering the light within. All traffic stopped ; the drivers of cars and pedestrians alike hurried to air raid shelters. Horses were tied to lamp-posts. The streets were as still as death. The only living things to be seen were grim policemen, their gas masks held at the ready.

Persons caught in restaurants were not made to go into the cellars, but were herded into back rooms with admonitions that should war come and the sirens start they would have to go down into the basement. I was in a restaurant near Potsdamerplatz at the time, and was held up an hour and a half before I was allowed to leave simultaneously with the first All Clear signal. I was catching a train, and almost missed it because of the delay of the *Luftschutz* rehearsal. I travelled out of Berlin in a darkened compartment as far as Potsdam. Then the lights came on, the attendant apologizing perfunctorily. Every one took it with good humour. I felt it to be an interesting experience.

Then, less than a month later, I went through my first genuine alarm, the one that announced the war to Berlin, that brought it vividly home. A week previous to hostilities air raid cellars had been marked carefully with bright new yellow and red signs. The office staff of the *Chicago Tribune* Bureau were supposed to go to the special cellar in the Esplanade Hotel, where the paper's Berlin office is located. The clerks and managers beseeched us to adhere to the orders that every one in the hotel must descend to the shelter in the sub-basement.



None of us relished being buried alive. We declined to go into the *Luftschutzraum*. At the first sound of the siren we locked the door. If Party men or air raid wardens demanded that we should proceed below we simply were not in. In other air raid alarms we did the same.

The blackout had been fully expected, but its terrors were new ! From the closed windows of our hotel suite we heard women moaning and sobbing in the streets, victims of wild hysteria. All telephone communication stopped. The police rounded up those who either were too frightened to obey the general orders to get under cover or ignored them. In both cases severe punishments followed. The alarm lasted forty-five minutes.

Outside in the hall we heard two uniformed *Luftschutzwarden*, or air raid wardens, talking. They were patrolling the halls, trying doors for persons who had not obeyed the safety rules.

As they paused one said, " I heard that this is no practice alarm. Seventy Polish ships are on their way here. An air officer told me ! " Then they moved on. Actually his statement was completely false. But rumours had swept through the German capital in an amazingly short time. People suddenly remembered something that an official, usually military, had said that afternoon, or five minutes before the sirens began !

It seemed logical that Polish planes might be on their way. The fighting had begun that morning. The Poles had sworn to destroy Berlin. Warsaw papers had declared that the Polish Army's first objective, if it went to war, was Germany and Berlin ! We were a short block from Hitler's Chancellery !

The streets had become deathly quiet. The siren's howl ceased. Suddenly I wanted to hear the All Clear signal more than anything else in life. We continued to work, but I had no conception of what I was doing. In the silence outside I imagined anti-aircraft gun crews standing to and listening apparatuses picking up the sound of hundreds of planes, ever coming nearer with their loads of deadly explosives.

At last the welcome All Clear came. But the blackout had begun. Berlin had seen its last brightly lighted evening for a long while.

After the first shock of the *Verdunklung*, and the realization that German soldiers were fighting in Poland, Berliners settled down to a dazed war routine. From the 1st September to the 3rd the official newspapers carried stories of German victories in the east. The people were cheered. They did not expect that England and France would enter the conflict. No one did !

Chamberlain's speech and the Allies' entrance into the war was a terrible blow to Germans everywhere. They had been led to believe such a thing to be impossible.

When the news came through to Sigrid Schultz, my chief and correspondent for the *Chicago Tribune* in Berlin, we both gasped. It seemed fantastic then ! I rushed from the office and into the lobby—on my way to the Ministry of Propaganda for more information. The desk clerks asked me if I had any late news. They usually asked, and we usually shrugged our shoulders, declining to answer. But this time I could not resist.

"You are at war with France and England !" I shouted.

The man could not have reacted more violently if I had soundly slapped him ! He recoiled and turned white. His hands, grasping the edge of the counter, flexed and the knuckles shone sharply.

"*Gott !*" he said. "*Gott im Himmel !*" He walked to the director's office, feeling his way carefully, as some one might after a motor accident. His reaction was not far different from that of others I saw that day and the days to follow. The German people found it hard to believe, and then, realizing, were overcome by a great sadness.

"Why ? Why ?" was heard in every café. "*Schrecklich ! Schrecklich !*" came from every one's lips. "Terrible ! Terrible !"

The next Sunday Berlin presented a tragic appearance. It is the custom of Germans in general, and of Berliners in particular, to stroll along their main streets and through the parks on Sunday. Ordinarily groups would be laughing, commenting on the shop-windows, truly enjoying their Sabbath walk. This Sunday no one smiled. Every one murmured their wonder at the terrible thing that had happened.

Shoulders slumped. Steps were slow. Faces were long. Germany once again was at war—twice in twenty-five years!

At the railway stations the scenes were quite different from those of 1914, when the troops went off to war with flowers hung round their necks and happy good-byes ringing in their ears. In the Friedrichstrasse terminus women and children cried loudly as their loved ones climbed into overcrowded troop trains, heading for the east, and the West Wall (the Siegfried Line).

Almost at a set signal the crying ceased. Last farewells were said quietly, in a matter-of-fact manner, as if wives and mothers refused to believe their menfolk were going off to possible death. They kissed them good-bye as if they were simply leaving their homes for a short week-end. It was far more poignant than tears and wailing.

Older reserves were called to the colours. They tramped through the streets in loose columns, their heads grey, or bald, their backs bent under knapsacks. At the time most of them had not even received uniforms. Some appeared to be fifty or more.

In the Sammelplatz the Army requisitioned horses. The square was filled with neighing beasts and the coarse shouts of soldiers as they jerked the mounts before inspecting officers. This horse for the cavalry, that one for the ambulance units. Long columns of artillery, supply, and motorized infantry rolled through the German capital. Dress uniforms disappeared. At the 'Ehrenmal,' monument to Germany's unknown soldier, the changing of the guard stopped.

People besieged the stores, buying quantities of everything available. Rationing of everything was just round the corner! Women staggered under armfuls of soap, cloth, perfume, and cosmetics. Men laid in vast supplies of cigars and cigarettes. Whole stocks were depleted in an hour. The banks experienced what nearly amounted to runs. The people bought and bought frantically. Every pfennig was put to work. Then the Government put an end to the wild buying.

Food cards appeared. Clothes cards came soon after. Göring roared warnings, swore that Germany must sacrifice. The radio boomed strident marches all day long. S.A.

uniforms dotted the streets more than ever before. Patriotism to Führer and Fatherland received its Nazi shot in the arm !

The newspapers screamed of horrible atrocities committed by the Poles. Sniping ! Killing ! Torture ! Rape of pregnant women ! Germans found in the Corridor with their hands mangled, breasts torn away, beheaded ! All these lurid reports filled the columns of Goebbels' sounding-boards. Sniping seemed to be most deplored. What the Germans did to the Poles in retaliation was not stated.

On September 12 von Stumm, Foreign Office Press chief, made an amazing statement to correspondents regarding Polish resistance. In a whining tone he announced, " We must have an orderly war, a correct war ! This Polish war must be fought in the way wars have been fought for centuries ! " The vision of a Pole valiantly defending his home against an invader simply would not occur to the " orderly, correct " Nazi mind ! Von Stumm, though generally popular among newsmen, was laughed at openly. A " correct " war indeed ! With Polish villages going up in flames, and retaliatory measures becoming more terrible than Attila's scourge ! Ruthless bombings ! The stale cry of " military objectives " being bombed, and nothing else touched ! Open towns and cities meant nothing in the Polish campaign. S.S. men and Herr Streicher's virulent magazine, *Das Schwarze Korps*, organ of the *Schutzstaffel*, were already crying for the death of every Pole, saying that inferior races must give way to German supremacy, must be eliminated ! Nietzsche, Superman, and Siegfried roared and thundered through Nazi editorials. Aryanism, anti-Semitism, and Nazi righteousness were pounded into German thought.

Meanwhile the mighty German pincers closed round the crumbling Polish armies. Nazi soldiery and Allied troops girded themselves along the Maginot and Siegfried lines. The British blockade tightened round Germany's ample girth. Ships were sunk. Air raids shattered the night. Patrols began dying in shell holes, in mud and blood. Populations shuddered at what lay ahead. Meals became war-time fare. Doctors were rushed to the front. Hospitals were evacuated for wounded. More and more reservists were called up.

The radio screeched more marches. The newspapers out-did themselves in damning articles, describing Chamberlain and Churchill as something execrable. A man was granted a divorce from his wife because she had accused him of lying like the British First Lord of the Admiralty. The judge said that such a statement was sufficient cause for a divorce, regardless of other circumstances.

Empty bellies, strictest regulations on everything, the blackout, and the constant fear that a son or husband had fallen descended on the German people.

The war was under way, its Juggernauts of hunger, fear, and death, of suspicion, propaganda, and hate, all grinding along efficiently !

## CHAPTER II

### THE TEARS BEGIN TO FLOW

*SHARPLY* at 7 P.M. on September 1 the air raid sirens shrieked throughout the city. By the time the All Clear signal came Berlin was completely blacked out. The Nazi capital was in Stygian darkness, with only the pinpricks of light that came from crawling vehicles piercing the deep gloom.

People who have imagined a blackout, but who have never experienced one, have told me that the feeling must be much the same as when city lighting plants fail and traffic lamps and street lighting, as well as electricity at home, are out of order.

I assure them there is little similarity ! Although, of course, everything is quite black, the *Verdunklung* flings a different impression at all who exist within it. One has a terrible sense of being totally alone, deserted by all humans, adrift in a sea of dismal dejection whose waves are invisible but sweep over one in great folds of depression. One is enveloped in an obscurity that always has behind it the dread reason for its being, the uncomfortable possibility that when—and if—the bombs do fall one may have your number on it !

That was how most of us felt in the first days of the blackout. As an adjustment it was a large order. Man gets used to anything in time, but utter darkness every night takes its toll of nerves when light has been the unfailing rule. Even if one is callous, and overcomes a natural revulsion against the black nights, there is omnipresent the reminder that enemy planes may appear at any moment to drop their missiles of death and destruction.

And the full moon is little comfort ! Though the streets are moonlit, one remembers that such nights are ideal for extensive raids ; that railways, prominent buildings, and military barracks within the city can be clearly seen from above.



During those first days vivid impressions etched themselves on my memory. Occasionally I would see one of the lumbering white buses that serve Berlin as it bumped slowly along, seemingly picking its way like a huge, blind creature through the murky avenues. It appeared twice as eerie because of the faint blue light that lit the vehicle's interior. Few cars were on the roads; but those that ventured out crept along at a snail's pace with dimmed parking lights, their lenses covered with black felt, leaving only a thin slit for slivers of illumination to mark them.

The only places where lamps were allowed to burn—and those only with a shaded glow—were the filling stations, with again the pale blue of the bus interior lights. Fire alarm boxes were shrouded in a slightly darker blue than the filling stations; tiny pilot lights indicated the entrances to great restaurants where, before the war, elaborate electric display signs had made the streets bright as day.

I went into a world-famous coffeehouse through thick felt curtains lined with heavy leather where they met. As I entered the bright lights of the restaurant's interior made me blink.

Finally, accustoming my eyes to the glare, or so it seemed after the black darkness outside, I saw Germans sitting everywhere, sipping coffee and talking in low tones. There was not a smile to be seen in the whole place.

Young men and women who obviously were out for the evening spoke only of the blackout, of the war, of Hitler, or of what England might do to-morrow, in the next few days—or that night! There was absolutely no idle chatter. Hundreds of persons simply sat and exchanged opinions in worried voices.

Walking down the streets of Berlin a few minutes later, I was shocked at the tremendous depression that had settled over the German capital. It has not been a pleasant city since National Socialism throttled the German nation with its iron grip, but in war-time—in the blackout—it is a cringing child waiting in the dark! There are no whimpers—that is forbidden—just discipline and a blind faith from which there is neither turning nor sympathy.

Persons passing one in the streets seemed ghosts looming

out of the murk. They talked in strange, loud tones. No one spoke in a natural tone of voice, but all rather accentuated their words—a whistling-past-a-graveyard sort of defence mechanism.

One of the dangers of the blackout in Germany then, and now, is that military cars are actually driven through the melancholy streets at thirty and forty miles an hour, daring corners and narrowly missing pedestrians and more slowly moving cars. The grey-green uniformed chauffeurs never use their horns ; yet they accomplish phenomenal feats of driving, using the same dim lights as other cars.

The newspapers do not publish accidents that happen in the blackout ; but frequently I saw a smashed car, or a maimed man or woman who had stepped out from the kerb without looking both ways carefully. By this time the death-roll must have run into hundreds and hundreds. Add slippery ice and snow for nine long weeks to the difficulties of driving in the dark, and the list of dead must have soared. German cars do not use chains. The metal that might be used for them must go into shells and guns.

When the moon emerged from behind heavy clouds I saw people staring up at the mushroom-shaped sirens that are affixed to the highest buildings in every district of Berlin. They give the impression of squatting on the edge of the roofs, ready to scream out their weird, strident warnings. And Germans watched them as if fascinated, hoping against hope that the high-pitched, metallic screeching would not sound again, as it did in the practice drill announcing the war on September 1.

As people stumbled through the inky-black streets at night, and two fish days a week cut an already shaven and shorn menu, and permission cards doubled every day for the simplest needs of life, Berliners realized the grim demands of war. All social diversions ceased except dreary movies—mostly tragedies or hurriedly thrown together stories of war and warriors. For several months at the start of the conflict dancing was *verboten*. Restaurants closed their doors at one o'clock.

Kerbs and street-crossings were painted with luminous

white and cellar gratings everywhere covered with bulky sandbags, streaked with white paint. These sandbags were supposed to prevent the fury of bombs from bursting in upon air raid shelters. Bandaged arms and faces became common sights, and broken limbs carried tenderly in home-made slings grew more and more prevalent as Germans gradually got used to the blackout, its pitfalls, and constant accidents.

It became very difficult to buy a torch. In all stores reserve stocks were sold out weeks before the war in anticipation of the blackout. If one was lucky enough to possess a lamp its bulb had to be dark blue, or the bulb casing covered with black or red paper.

In the courtyards of blocks of offices and flats, piles of accumulated debris from the construction of air raid cellars were hazards. People coming in late stumbled over them, and their cries of sudden pain came regularly through opened windows in darkened rooms above.

Fewer and fewer cars appeared in the streets. The newspapers were filled with advertisements of cars for sale at amazing prices, but there was no market for the bargains. It was nearly impossible to get petrol. Laws were put into effect forbidding the use of cars except for the most urgent of purposes. Any one caught using his car otherwise was subject to severe punishment. Petrol became as valuable as cold cash, and the man who possesses a petrol ration-book still is considered lucky.

Finally the Government closed all but twelve petrol stations throughout Berlin, a city of over four million people and thousands upon thousands of cars. These twelve were sufficient for the cars still allowed to run.

Special laws governing motor-cars were passed daily. Fewer and fewer people were allowed to use them. Red V's had to be painted on licence plates. Businesses were ruined because they could not use vans and delivery cars. Horse-drawn wagons were seen everywhere. Diplomats went to work on bicycles. Odd conveyances appeared in the streets. Polish prisoners pulled and tugged at overloaded carts.

Each day the Government of the Reich issued new orders and regulations. Gaulciter Joseph Goebbels of Berlin (he

was tossed this office in exchange for Hitler's ownership of the biggest printing house in Germany) outdid himself in more and more stringent war-time rulings for the German capital. Typewriters could not be sold to private persons after October 1. More and more food cards and regulations came daily ! Chocolate was rationed. Good Nazis must cut their smoking down to two cigars a day. Housewives must economize. Tea and coffee became rank beverages, 'ersatzed' so as to be unrecognizable. Laws and more regulations descended upon Germans in a veritable snowstorm of 'verbotens' and 'war education.'

At the grocery stores long queues of *Hausfrauen* waited to buy food. They stood pensive and quiet, their food cards tightly clutched in nervous hands. These cards are supposed to last four weeks ; but this is impossible, even if the thinnest of meals are served. At one store I heard a woman bitterly complaining that she wished to buy only a single apple. After an hour and a half she got close enough to the counter to get her one piece of fruit. There were so many women crowded into the shop that the assistants were nearly crazy trying to serve everybody. Later the owner of the shop sadly remarked to me that the volume of business meant nothing. His profits were regulated by the Party and disposed of in Party chests, winter help work, and a dozen other opened and waiting Nazi palms.

Each housewife is assigned to a single grocer's shop, one butcher, and one baker. She can shop nowhere else. Food cards allow purchases only where designated. An insidious form of graft sprang up. "Keep in with your grocer, and you won't quite starve !" was a cry I heard from many German women with large families to feed. The shopkeepers were quick to see their advantage. They have become the *elite* of the neighbourhood, spreading favours where it will do them the most good, ignoring those who can do nothing for them or have dared to complain.

Gas-masks were slung over the shoulders of weary men and women, who felt them banging and thumping at the small of the back all day long. These were masks bought long before the war. German propaganda claims have stated that every

German has a mask. That is not true, and the purchase of a mask after the war started was an impossibility. The type that had been available previous to September 1 is the same as the Army uses. There are none to spare.

Every day I saw more and more female volunteer air raid precaution workers. The girls, all young, wear overalls strapped in at the wrists and ankles. The costume is dark grey and resembles a motor mechanic's work clothes. Numbers of uniformed nurses in blue and white striped aprons and hooded heads were seen along all the main avenues. They seemed proud of their office and swung along, Red Cross bag at their sides, in thumping, heel-banging strides.

Germans, who before the war ate few sweets, now began crowding the cafés and eating cakes and pastries three or four times a day. If I questioned them closely they always admitted that they were stuffing themselves with sugar to fill the empty space left after a meal. Either this, or the expectancy that soon there would be no more *Kuchen* to be had !

I returned late one night from the office to my *pension* in the Potsdamerstrasse. The news had made weary writing that evening. The Poles were on the brink of destruction, their armies either retreating in wild disorder or being slowly cut to pieces.

I undressed and crawled into bed, exhausted. I could not have been asleep for more than two hours when the air raid sirens began wailing. I looked at my radium-dialled clock. It was three-thirty. A cold chill passed over me, waking me thoroughly. The sirens continued to screech. This was no practice. Bombers must be on their way to Berlin !

The moon was bright outside, and that didn't cheer me either. Targets would be clearly obvious from the air. In the corridor I heard people scuffling about, the nervous crying of a woman, a pounding on doors.

The air raid shelter in our courtyard was not finished. Every one would be expected to descend to the cellar. I was resolved that I would not go down. I didn't fancy being buried alive !

Outside my door the noise was louder. People were swearing as they pushed and shoved in the darkness. The voice of

an air raid warden, the landlady, shouted that every one must go to the cellar immediately. The woman whose voice I had heard crying was now a creature of hysterical sobbing and half-screams. A baby wailed dismally. There were more curses. Suddenly the sirens ceased. The warning had been given. In the hall every one stopped what he was doing—shocked. Another chill went down my back. When would the All Clear signal sound? Certainly not immediately! There might be bombs and death before that welcome noise came.

I remembered where I was, a block from the Potsdamer Bahnhof, a legitimate military objective, five blocks from Hitler's Chancellery, two blocks from the Anhalter Bahnhof, another railway station. If bombs did fall anywhere near these three objectives my *pension* surely would be in the line of fire. I began imagining the distant sound of plane engines—of anti-aircraft guns!

I got up and slipped my bathrobe on. It seemed queerly funny for a minute that I had not thought to get out of bed. Suddenly some one banged at my door.

"Every one else is below, Herr Raleigh!" yelled my landlady. "I am the air raid warden here, and you must come to the cellar without delay!" She pounded the door again. I didn't answer. "Are you awake, Herr Raleigh? Get up immediately!" she commanded.

"Yes, I'm awake," I answered, "but I don't want to go to the cellar. I'd rather stay here!"

"You can't stay there!" she ordered. "You must come to the cellar!"

"I won't come to the cellar," I said angrily.

"Very well," she replied, and a note of panic was in her voice. Every one else was below. The planes might be overhead any moment. "If you don't come out and go down with me I shall have to fine you fifty marks and report you to the police! Fifty marks, Herr Raleigh!" she finished nervously.

I could spare the fifty marks, and even go through the inquisition at the police-station if necessary, but a new thought had occurred to me, "I didn't want to be buried alive, but there was a good chance that no bomb would fall near by, and

it might make a 'colour' story on how Germans reacted to an air raid.

"All right," I acquiesced. "I'll come. You go ahead. I'll be right down."

She almost cried "Thank you," but stopped herself, saying she would go on ahead, and if I didn't show up for roll-call below she would certainly see that I got into trouble. Her footsteps echoed down the hall and clattered over the steps as she dashed for the cellar.

As I put on a muffler and socks the silence that had fallen in the *pension*, the courtyard, and the rest of Berlin became a live, creeping thing of fear. Noises at night characterize any big city. Their presence is the breath of any metropolis after dark. When they cease disaster hovers. I felt horribly alone and helpless. Every one was waiting. There was nothing to be done. Once before I had had a similar feeling. That was in the midst of an earthquake in Montana. There was no place to run to; nothing to do but stand and wait until it was over. Complete impotence in time of danger is a dreadful feeling.

I had often enough wondered how I should react to an air raid. Secretly I admitted to myself that I probably should be scared stiff. I was. But the fright was different, a sort of despair. Nothing could be done, so one waited in horror until it was over. The taste of copper came into my mouth. I was calm, so calm that I was surprised. Then I knew why. It was the same resignation I had experienced years ago in the earthquake. Cold reason displaced possible panic, because panic would not have done any good. I was perfectly helpless to do anything but see it through!

My steps on the stairs were empty, like the tread of an unsuspecting stranger in a haunted house. At the first landing I thought of taking the lift. Another reaction! Then I laughed! Take a lift in an air raid?

I walked across the chill courtyard. The moon was bright. Again I imagined the drone of planes. A hand beckoned me into the cellar entrance. I stepped inside.

Then I got flaming mad. Why hadn't I run down the stairs and across the courtyard? Did I want to get killed? Anger changed to laughter. What was the difference? But I



still wondered why I had taken my time getting below, once the full import of what was happening broke upon me—and that was after the warden had hurled her last warning over her rapidly retreating shoulders.

The cellar was jammed with half-clad people. The landlady, wholly collected again, was intoning a roll-call in a half-hushed voice. One by one the inhabitants of the house answered. A light burned near a black furnace far from the door. I began to see people. A man was tearing cloth to bits. I noticed it was the edge of his dressing-gown. Several had gas-masks. A young mother was trying frantically to adjust a heavy mask over the face of her tiny baby. The child tossed its head from side to side and squalled. The father stood anxiously beside his wife, offering suggestions in jerky, whispered phrases. The mask would not fit. The mother threw it on the floor in desperation and hugged the baby to her breast tightly. The father swore softly, bitterly.

An old woman sobbed in a corner. Men and boys were gathering buckets of water near the door. Some one plaintively asked for help in moving an enormous bag of sand. Sand and water were requisites of every air raid shelter.

The majority of the frightened people simply stood and stared at one another. The minutes dragged on. Some one near the furnace burst into violent hysterics. The cries were quickly silenced by the landlady, who, in her office of air raid warden, acted in command of the group. She had entirely regained her composure. She stopped a minute in her rounds to remind me that she had two sons in the Army.

Thirty minutes more went by with no sound outside—no anti-aircraft fire or plane engines shattering the moonlit night. Then suddenly every one shuddered. Tempelhof aerodrome, militarized as soon as war began, broke into the noisy clatter of warming engines. The sputtering roars of planes being got ready for the take-off came clearly through the night.

"Our fighters!" said a man.

"That means that the enemy must be near by," whispered the mother of the baby, and she tried again to adjust the clumsy gas-mask to the child's small head. The cellar trembled with new fears, voiced in hoarse, nervous sentences.

"They will be here soon !"

"Lord save us !"

"What shall we do ?"

"Keep calm ! Keep calm !"

"But the bombs——"

"*Pfui !* Our planes will drive them off."

"Who are they ? Poles ? The English or the French ?"

"Get the water and sand ready ! Keep calm ! Everything will be all right !"

Half-shouts and warnings came from all corners, and fresh tears and hysterics from round the furnace, where most of the women were. We waited fifteen minutes more. Tempelhof was quiet. No anti-aircraft guns had been heard. Some one said that if they had been close enough for planes to take off from Tempelhof they would have been over Berlin before now—that we should have heard the guns. The argument seemed logical. The tenseness relaxed a little.

I thought of the waiting gun crews on top of the Dye Trust Building and the Chancellery. I remembered how they looked at drill, steel helmets laced down, gas-masks on, standing beside their quick-firers or reclining in a chair with range-finding mechanisms strapped to their backs, pointing lenses into the sky. I imagined how they must feel, out in the open, targets for machine-gun bullets and bombs, exposed, with nothing to do but stand and wait. I felt sorry for them as individuals ; considering them as a system of defence, I hoped they would crumble before waves of concentrated attack.

Germany had not felt the heavy weight of war for over a hundred years. The reactions of these average Berliners in the cellar indicated the effect a few good bombings of the Nazi capital would have. They gave every appearance of not being able to 'take it.'

Many other American correspondents believed the same. The catch in such methods was that London and Paris would get a dose of identical hell, that such raids would not be worth the terrible retaliation that would come. Göring had recently stated that many of the Rhinelanders were being evacuated from their homes because they were not made of

true German steel, as were Brandenburgers, Prussians, and other North Germans. The Rhinelanders are of more gentle, peaceful stuff than the rest of Germany, but morale would certainly crack if Berlin was subjected to intensive bombings.

The concensus of opinion among Americans who had gone into cellars all over Berlin that night and watched the people's reactions was that Germans, as a whole, simply couldn't stand up to the nerve-smashing effects of bombing raids. They had seen, as I had, hysterics, panic, wild fear, and disorder. Several had been through the last war, had observed the French and the English under the strain of an air raid. They insisted there was no comparison. "The Allied nations," in the words of one man whose name I will not mention, for he is still in Berlin, "simply had more guts, what it takes, and could stand up to five times as much as the Nazis ever would!"

In another few minutes the All Clear siren sounded. Sighs of relief echoed through the dim cellar. A bucket of water was kicked over as we climbed out of the blackness into the moonlight. No one bothered to refill the bucket. It lay beside the stairs as people laughed and joked, pouring into the courtyard like school children rushing into the open at break.

The next day we heard that forty Polish bombers, a suicide squad of the last of the Air Force, had tried to reach Berlin. They had all been shot down on the way, either by anti-aircraft fire or by German fighters. One had come within twenty miles of the Nazi capital before it was finished off.

The effect the air raid had upon Berliners was officially reflected in an order Marshal Göring issued soon after the night of the alarm. He stated that the sirens would not be used unless a serious raid was on its way, unless Berlin was really in danger from swarms of enemy planes. A single plane, even though a bomber, would not be the signal for a general alarm. Instead of being heartened many Berliners expressed the fear that they might be killed without any warning, that they would not know when to go to the air raid shelters or whether they would be safe in the streets. A wave of whispered resentment swept over the city. Naturally there was no

open criticism, but the alarm had brought war home to Berliners—literally scared them to death and given the capital a profound attack of jitters that even to-day has not abated.

During the months I was in Berlin I saw the blackout rulings lifted upon only one occasion, and this lasted a scant hour.

The square before the Stettiner Bahnhof was brilliantly floodlit in honour of the arrival of the dead body of Colonel General Werner von Fritsch, who was stated to have been killed in action in front of Warsaw. The square was lined with thousands, who saluted Nazi fashion when a battalion of the Regiment Deutschland and an escort of armoured cars were drawn up as guards for the general's coffin.

The escort and infantry saluted and presented arms when von Fritsch's casket, draped in a Nazi battle flag, was fastened to the trail of a heavy field-gun and towed away by a large artillery tractor.

Waiting in the station, before the train from the east came in, were thirty or more officers of the High Command. Their conversation was subdued and reverent, showing their deep respect for the occasion.

When the coffin was strapped to the gun the officers stood stiffly, saluting, in a semicircle round the station entrance. Every one maintained the salute until the gun and coffin were round the corner. Then the officers hurried to their staff cars and joined the slow-moving procession. The officers were to stand guard all night beside the honoured coffin.

The following day a formal funeral was held in front of the 'Ehrenmal.' Göring officiated, representing Hitler, who was said to be too busy to attend the ceremonies. After a speech extolling von Fritsch's virtues and a cannon salute of eighteen guns, the coffin was taken to a military cemetery and the last three guns of the full twenty-one-gun salute accorded him fired as the coffin was lowered into the grave.

The flag-draped box was not opened from the time it left Poland. Relatives were not permitted to see the body.

The true story of what happened to von Fritsch I heard later in New York from a thoroughly reliable source. Von Fritsch never took part in the campaign in Poland; he

was murdered by Gestapo agents before the war began. Earlier in the bloody saga of Nazi history von Fritsch was removed from his important post in the Army by Hitler upon a ridiculous charge. The accusation thrown at the general was that he was a homosexual, and therefore unfit to hold a post in the new Nazi Army. Being cashiered under these unjust circumstances nearly broke the old general's heart.

Finally Hitler withdrew the charge and reinstated von Fritsch, giving him an honorary colonelcy of his old artillery regiment. It was with this unit that he was supposed to have been killed.

The truth is that before the war the general and a number of other officers in Berlin were kidnapped, some being killed—von Fritsch among them—and others totally disappearing. An officer who was present at a farewell party at the general's house upon the occasion of the departure of one of the officers for a post abroad with a Nazi Embassy the next day got wind of the disappearance of all his dinner companions of the night before. Somehow he was spared or overlooked. He lost no time in escaping over the border and eventually reached New York. He explained that a meeting had been arranged the day he left at which every one who had been at the party the night before was to gather. He called at von Fritsch's house, only to find no one at home and a plain-clothes man from the Gestapo outside. He telephoned several others who had been expected there as planned. None was at home. Strange voices answered the 'phone, or it rang without answer. Taking his cue, he dashed for the frontier in his car. Apparently still unsuspected, he was allowed to cross without trouble.

His belief is that von Fritsch was too beloved by the Army. The general had been responsible for many of the advances the Nazi armed forces had made in the seven years of Hitler's rule. He had unconsciously committed the highest sin—become too powerful! So Hitler broke him, restored him to doubtful favour, and then covered his murder with a trumped-up death in Poland—a military funeral following!

In early September searchlights often were seen in the dark sky. The British steadily asserted that their planes had

been over Berlin and other cities in southern and western Germany. At night the horizon would be streaked with distant beams. Around Berlin itself searchlight batteries were constantly practising. One never quite departed from the possibility of an air raid. Evidences of preparations were everywhere. In the halls of the Hotel Esplanade stacks of mattresses were piled on every floor. The management claimed they were to be sent to field hospitals; the hotel air raid wardens said they were to be used to smother fires. All attics were being cleared of inflammable materials. The streets were full of carts and wagons, hauling debris away from where extra air raid shelters were being built. Even taxis were pressed into service to help to dispose of excavated earth.

Red Cross flags were hung outside most air raid cellars. At the Ministry of Propaganda a detail of Hitler Youth was placed on duty to help in case of an air raid. The squad ranged from fifteen to eighteen years old, and took its responsibility very seriously, hurrying here and there on errands but always with an ear cocked for the first scream of the warning sirens.

Both Miss Schultz and I had frequent broadcasts to make, she for the Mutual Broadcasting System and I for N.B.C. The shows reached America about seven or eight in the evening. That meant they had to be broadcast from Berlin at two and three in the morning. Buses and underground railways stopped at once. Taxis were rare things late at night. Miss Schultz decided to buy a tiny Topolino, an Italian miniature car just holding two persons and named by the Germans a *Mäuschen*, or little mouse.

Mubsi is the cable address for the Mutual Broadcasting System; *ergo* the car was named! Miss Schultz could not drive. That task fell to me each night as we began the long trip from Potsdamerplatz to Kaiserdamm, where the wireless station was.

It was one thing to drive a car with four forward gears, all in exact reverse to the American gears I had been handling for years, and it was another to drive at all in an inky black-out, with practically no headlights! Add to these hazards

occasionally rainy nights when visibility was almost nil, and you have some idea of the difficulties facing me when Mubsi was needed.

Somehow I managed. Why I didn't hit kerbs, pedestrians, other cars, or smash through a store window is still a wondering question in my mind. Most of the time on a rainy night one drove by guesswork—and that was all! However, I was exceedingly fortunate. I did not knock over any fire hydrants or traffic policemen while in Berlin behind Mubsi's diminutive wheel. And I'm positive that my good fortune was only by the grace of God, because there were thousands of times when I could do no more than hope that an especially black blob ahead was a street opening, and not the river Spree or the side of an army lorry!

However, Mubsi was temperamental and rivalled a diva for moods. She worked six days a week. The seventh she simply died! Every week for three months, without fail, her battery ran down!

Miss Schultz was usually on the air on Sunday night. The Saturday before, always about seven o'clock, the battery would allow the starter to moan faintly and I'd have to get out and push. Sweating and straining, sometimes for blocks, I would manage to get the precious darling to the garage. There she would sit until Monday, when another new battery would have to be bought or the old one recharged. On special holidays Mubsi took the same attitude as on Saturday night, and died a peaceful death! It usually rained or snowed on holidays. This seemed to delight Mubsi's heart. She loved to stall on lonely boulevards late at night, far from filling stations or garages.

She had belonged to an English correspondent who had been forced to leave her alone in Germany when he fled home just before the war. A wild Irishman who had been through the Spanish war with Franco, and was now acting as a correspondent for an Irish paper, fell heir to Mubsi. They must have had a lovely time together, for when Miss Schultz acquired the *Mäuschen* it certainly acted as if it had had more than enough of life.

In the first two months after the car was bought repair

bills equalled the purchase price. For all I know Mubsi still remains a drain on nerves and pocket-books. And, to paraphrase an old song, "I wonder who's pushing her now?"

The Nazis are making strides in combating the dangers of the blackout, creating aids that will adjust the people to utter darkness at night. Recently in Munich drivers and pedestrians were treated to a new sight in the blackout. They were startled to note that the police and traffic posts emitted a soft green glow! Despite the white coats of the officers and the whitewashed kerbs and safety islands, accidents had still continued to mount in the Bavarian city as a result of the perils of the blackout. The authorities have a new idea. It was developed successfully, and street markers, islands and kerbs and the coats of the traffic officers, were impregnated with a radio-active substance which becomes highly phosphorescent after being treated by an ultra-violet-ray lamp.

The result is that policemen and traffic posts now give out an emerald emanation that transforms the black night into a green fairyland.

The experiment was considered so much of a success that the helmets of the police and their night truncheons are to be similarly treated, as will be all traffic indicators and warning signs.

When the German *Hausfrau* goes to the grocer's she faces a daily personal crisis. Her family must be fed, her children receive nourishing fruits and vegetables. For months this has not been entirely possible, but fleeting repasts of 'ersatzed' essentials have been the rule instead of the exception.

The first consideration of the Reich is the Army. It must feed itself with the best. The people are a definite second, and have got along only because of the ruggedness of the German stomach. Even before the war great numbers of Germans constantly fell sick with ulcers and other digestive ailments. The State-controlled newspapers refuse to admit grim deficiencies. They say that the nation is persevering under great difficulties, but will not credit the British blockade with the damage it has already done to Nazi stomachs and general health.

The winter curtailed very considerably the main war-time



dishes. The total crop of potatoes, which had been stored in the ground, froze solid. Cabbage and other available greens were irretrievably frostbitten. Fish, long boosted by the Nazis as the new German dish, suffered because of the lack of refrigerator vans. If inclement weather guaranteed the delivery of fish from the Baltic, the same severe cold ruined vegetable shipments. When days and weeks of icy weather ceased the fish spoiled on its way from the north.

Spoiled or not, the fish was sold and eaten. There was little else, and meat cards at the end of the month were as precious as gold. Berlin and other cities had epidemics of ptomaine poisoning. The finest hotels in the capital were unable to avoid the fish problem. Either they served rotting cod and salmon or they had no main *entrée* on the menu.

*Ersatz* products were developed daily. 'Italienisches Taschentuch,' or 'Italian pocket-handkerchief,' as we named it, was always on the menu at the Adlon each fish day, Mondays and Fridays. 'Taschentuch' was listed *ravioli*, but its ingredients were chemically produced. Its flavour was artificial, its chemical colouring actually poison, and its nutrient qualities nil. Little that is served in Germany's finest restaurants to-day would pass Government requirements.

Further, in order to get even a passable amount of food for lunch and dinner fabulous prices were paid. I often spent the equivalent of a pound or twenty-five shillings for lunch, and did not get enough to eat. A shilling at almost any of our restaurants or roadside cafés would have bought infinitely more!

But the real sufferers were the German women with families to feed, and the slimmest of food cards with which to do it.

The *Hausfrau* had trials enough to get sufficient on the table even to make a small dent in the family's hunger. To complicate matters, her grocer and butcher insisted that she should purchase, in addition to what she wanted, other articles that might be totally unnecessary to her larder. If there were a shortage of pork the butcher would not sell any unless the customer also bought a meat or kind of fish that he happened to have plenty of that day. Everything thereby became

doubly expensive, and many items had to be bought that were neither needed nor desired.

Fruit, when it could be had, followed the same form of graft, and vegetables likewise. How prices ranged is illustrated by what we used to pay for a single pear. Since September 1939 the price in any restaurant has been from half a crown to three-and-sixpence apiece, anywhere from two to three travel marks! I never saw pears on sale in grocery stores. Occasionally Italian peaches or, strangely, Palestine oranges could be bought in the stores. But the chief fruit commodity was apples, and these of exceedingly poor quality.

The German grocer's and butcher's shops are, without exception, sadly under-stocked. The shelf space is there, but it is seldom well covered. If the vacant spots are filled it is usually with a vast amount of some item readily available in cans—such as meats that cannot be sold until the rigours of winter and the dictates of the *Winterhilfswerk* allow.

Every month during the cold seasons the *Winterhilfswerk* collects money in the streets. Sometimes the collection is made by S.A. men, sometimes by the police or the Hitler-Jugend. When a coin drops into the red collection boxes a small token is given, to be worn on the coat lapel.

Germany's plan of eliminating beggars and starvation of even a few is consummated through the *Winterhilfswerk*. The organization is enormous. It collects funds and canned meat which cannot be sold until all fresh meat has disappeared from the market. In time of war the *Hilfswerk* held up the sale of canned goods as long as possible. "Everything must be conserved!" said Göring. So the money was collected and the reserve food supplies withheld. Fresh meat became scarce. Still no canned reserves were released. On March 1, 1940, the *Winterhilfswerk* had not allowed the sale of its precious cans.

In April warmer weather came. The pinch of winter relaxed slightly. The cans remained in the warehouses, an iron ration for Germany in the future. Meanwhile unlimited harm had been done to the German constitution. German stomachs were ulcerated. Tuberculosis increased.

In the past, when the canned goods had been released

during the cold winter months, ptomaine poisoning statistics soared. The authorities had not supervised the canning as carefully as they should. Nazis cannot bear to see anything go to waste ; so rotting piles of second-grade meats were tinned anyway, and the inevitable result occurred. This, of course, never appeared in the papers, nor was it allowed to be dispatched to the outer world by correspondents. They might hint at it ; but the *Winterhilfswerk* is a powerful force in the Reich, and criticism of it is dangerous, whether deserved or not.

In August 1939 it was not unusual to find many shops with practically nothing on the shelves. The owner could not get the merchandise at any price. In the larger establishments business was conducted in a slipshod manner. The assistants, for the most part, seemed to be unfamiliar with their work. One must do what he is told in Nazi Germany. If there is a dearth of grocer's assistants, then bricklayers and dental students must fill the gaps. If a shortage of bricklayers is seen then grocers' assistants lay bricks, and so on.

Germany had attempted to become entirely self-supporting. This was the crux and meaning of Göring's Four Year Plan. The policy made low prices for imports impossible. Prices were regulated to that end. "Guns instead of butter !" roared Germany's Number Two man.

However, all foodstuffs were expensive, whether imported or not. Eggs were rarities. Those that were available came from Latvia ; many went bad on the way. Chickens and meat that could be bought were of inferior quality because of poor food. The Nazis could not afford to waste good food on animals. The commodity could be altered into fairly palatable dishes, and serve a more urgent purpose.

Butter was bought weekly in very small quantities. Claims were made that the six ounces available per person each week had some of its nutrient value removed in order to double the scanty supply. The police issued butter cards ; these were taken to dairymen, who, on their receipt, drew the collective amount of his cards from a wholesaler. All this was regulated by the strictest measures, yet graft and illicit trade in butter were common occurrences.

Party organizations tried to popularize staple foods that were then abundant in the Reich. Because it would have been unwise to ignore their 'dictates,' which are thinly clothed as 'suggestions,' the German table served the same German-grown vegetable four or five times a week.

The Deutsches Frauenwerk, or Organization of German Womanhood, proudly boasted that because of its activities in introducing new recipes cabbage could be served many times a week without inviting monotony. However, it still remained cabbage, and if the German woman could have honestly expressed an open opinion its popularity would have soon ceased.

Grade-A milk left a residue in a jug after it had been poured, clearly showing that it had been adulterated.

Lemons and oranges, which provided food elements of vital importance, were available only from time to time; then they rose in price.

The accepted form of selling meat products wholesale was not without its abuses. In slaughterhouses the various parts of the animals to be killed and sold were numbered. A hog's quarter might be numbered "two," his sides "one," his shanks "three," and so on. Each retail butcher who came to buy also had numbers. A large board daily recorded which butcher was to receive what parts of meat. Every one who was present could not buy. There were always more buyers than there were numbers enabling purchases.

Further, a butcher might be forced to buy what he already had in stock if he wanted to stay in the good graces of his wholesaler. If he declined to buy when the numbers were put up he would find himself on the list of undesirables whose number never appeared on the board. Favouritism meant a well-supplied shop for one, and practically nothing for another—or flat failure.

Finally, the woman shopper always had to buy at the same shop, as she was known there and her chances of getting something were better than if she tried another place whose proprietor was reserving what he had in stock for his regular customers.

Coffee could be had in small quantities. All of it was

adulterated with chicory, and was becoming more and more unpalatable as the percentage of substitution was increased.

Already in August there was a dangerous meat shortage in Germany. The Army received most of what was to be had. Pork and veal were almost unobtainable in the last two weeks before the war. Restaurants began to offer slimmer and slimmer menu choices.

Marmalade and jams were to be had in quantity. They were not popular; the Government tried to popularize them to take the place of sausage and cold meats that formerly were used in sandwiches. The German loves his sausage and cannot get used to jams instead.

Meanwhile during this period German newspapers heralded what were claimed to be great strides in building stronger German bodies, a healthier Aryan race.

Perhaps the picture in August 1939 looked black. It was a veritable heaven to what the following months brought—food cards for nearly everything; shocking shortages; steadily increasing *ersatz* products; permission slips for clothes, shoes, leather goods; a standardized soap for all (and this in minute quantities); malnutrition, sicknesses caused by lack of nutrients and vitamins, and an alarming lack of foods of all kinds. Decrees, edicts, and laws forbade abuse of the food statutes. Imprisonment and death became common penalties for those who dared to disobey the dictates of Nazi Germany at war.

Returning from a trip to the Polish front, I realized that if I did not do my shopping immediately, before the shops closed, I should have nothing to eat over the week-end. I hurried to the grocer's where my landlady had me registered. Until then I had left most of my shopping to other persons; but that evening I could not reach them, so had to tackle the job myself.

I had my food cards—red, white, rose-coloured, yellow, and blue, all for different essentials. I was registered at a grocer's in one district, a butcher's shop in another, and a baker's blocks away from the other two.

After rushing to the Magdeburg Platz from the office and buying rather over three ounces of marmalade for breakfast,

the limit for a week, I managed to get a taxi in the blackout and get to my grocer's, in Potsdamerstrasse, before its doors were locked.

Here I offered my *Lebensmittel* card, or general foodstuff permit slip. The girl assistant carefully examined the dates on the coupons and handed the card back, saying that what coupons I had not used had expired while I was away. She said she could sell me nothing.

The previous week I had been at the same shop and bought the maximum allowed me. At the time I was assured that I would be able to buy the same amount the following week.

"What has happened?" I asked. "Why can't I buy now? The coupons are in order; you promised that I should be able to get the same amount——"

"We have been warned," she answered in a whisper. "No more favours can be given."

The cards were so complicated that it took a mathematician to figure out what was available and when. And the Reich had arranged the food allowances and dates on the coupons so that the housewife was cheated out of several items. Through this method they could say that a general amount could be bought, but actually, buying when the dates on the coupons allowed, several were useless through a deliberate confusing and reprinting of the dates on the card.

The week before the maximum amount I could buy, as a single person, had cost me, in the equivalent of English money, six shillings. For this I got a quarter of a pound of rice, an egg, a loaf of bread, three and a half ounces of coffee substitute, some pudding mixture, and three ounces of margarine. At the butcher's I was able to buy three small steaks, whose combined weight was ten ounces, and two ounces of sausage. The meat cost me nine shillings.

All I managed to buy on this particular shopping foray was marmalade and an ounce of sausage.

Soon after this experience I moved to another *pension*, and my landlady there handled the shopping for me. She tried hard; but if it had not been for parcels from Denmark and Holland, allowed to foreign correspondents through the grace

of the Ministry of Propaganda, I should have been as badly off as the Berliners themselves. As it was, in nine months I lost seventeen pounds !

The Reich began outdoing its former efforts to become self-supporting. All German cities with a population of over a hundred thousand established organizations to collect second-hand shoes for workers who, on account of their work, used extra shoe leather. In Leipzig committees appointed by the Office of Economics of that city collected fourteen thousand pairs of used shoes for its postmen, messengers, and others who had been unable to buy new footwear.

The leather shortage in Germany is being met with what the authorities term "adequate methods of substitution." Among the innovations developed are several imitation raw materials to take the place of leather. German chemists and economists do not claim that the substitutes are as good as the real thing, but affirm that they will serve in the emergency the war has created.

Leather fibres are being substituted for real leather soles. Rabbit and other small animal and rodent skins are being converted into shoe uppers, and scraps of leather are glued together with wooden bases to make inner soles.

Rubber soles have become extremely popular, on account of the shortage of genuine leather soles, but even these cannot be purchased without a *Bezugsschein*, or permission slip.

The Army and police force can buy shoes that are a hundred per cent. leather, and all sports shoes are made of the genuine article. It is not an uncommon-sight to see Berliners walking to their offices in ski and football boots.

One large German shoe concern claims that it has saved 3300 tons of pure leather by the use of substitute soles, and another 2000 tons by using wooden heels instead of leather ones. The accumulated reserve is available for the armed forces, the company states.

German economists affirm that through the use of leather substitutes the population will be supplied with as many soles as it needs. Authorities assert that men will be able to get three pairs of shoes resoled in a year ; women, four ; and children, five to six pairs in a twelve months' period.

Some Germans whose shoes have worn out are trying to resole them at home rather than wait for their turn in the long list at the shoemaker's shop. The Government has made provision for the supply of the raw material, but it will not be leather. Appropriate substitutes, such as rubber soles, are available, but most of the genuine leather on hand is only for the use of the Army and police. Special permission slips are being issued which will allow the amateur shoemaker to get his soles. Without the slips this commodity cannot be bought.

The value of permission slips and food-cards cannot be emphasized enough when trying to describe war-time Germany. An example is a recent change in the weight value of meat coupons if certain kinds of meat are purchased.

If pig's head is bought minus the ears and the jowls a coupon for a hundred grammes of meat, or slightly over three ounces, is good for double its stated weight allowance. Ox-tails, pigs' feet, and animal lungs fall into the same category. If entrails and tripe are purchased the *Hausfrau* gets four times the value printed on her meat ration coupon.

Under the new regulations bones can be obtained separately. However, the weight allowance of ordinary meat is still calculated with the bones. Pigs' heads are an exception to this because, without the ears and jowls, the head is mostly bone. By means of the new regulations German women hope to stretch the meat allowance of a pound a week per person.

After the beginning of 1940 a large number of shops selling expensive items ceased to exist. Soap, for instance, can be sold only in very small specified quantities and a maximum to each customer of one cake a month for the face and another for laundry purposes.

"How can we make ends meet when absolutely no margin of profit is possible, and when the best customer can buy only a cheap article?" asked one shopkeeper, who gave that as his excuse for going out of business. In the early days of the war Germans rushed to shops everywhere and bought up as much as the shopkeeper would sell. Stocks shrank to scanty proportions. Even if they could be replaced the regulations



prevented luxury articles, such as good toilet soap, from being sold.

Another retail group whose sales have diminished is the photography shops. The reason for their drop in sales is that most of the amateurs are at the front ; and, as D.N.B., the official German news agency, puts it, "every one is too busy these days to bother with the hobby of photography !"

For Germans this is a broad hint not to be ignored. D.N.B.'s voice carries the full weight of Nazi influence behind it. Then, too, photographic equipment is being made only for the Army and the Air Force. The commercial factories that hitherto had manufactured large numbers of cameras and accessories for public sale now turn their entire efforts to military demand.

Some of the Nazi regulations concerning the purchase and use of products are amusing. For instance, special new Government regulations have been issued with regard to the type of soap to be applied in cleaning German churches. No soap that contains fat is to be used for washing floors, walls, or windows. Substitutes are the alternative, as the authorities consider they will do as well for scrubbing purposes.

A representative of the Ministry of Economic Affairs stated that every means of saving soap must be considered, and that consequently priests and attendants who require extra quantities of soap to keep their robes and vestments spotless will have to use their own ration cards without special treatment. "There certainly will be no additional ration offered for their convenience," said the official.

In answer to the question of whether German churches will receive the necessary oil to keep their 'perpetual lights' lit, the Ministry of Economic Affairs briefly announced that the solution to that problem would come later. "Nothing definite can be said at the moment on the matter," another representative of the Ministry concluded.

Since October 19, 1939, German housewives have had to watch carefully their disposal of kitchen refuse, seeing that it is placed in clean cans and ready for weekly collection by the National Welfare Organization, the N.S.V. The refuse must be sorted out, and all scraps of bread and vegetables separated

for collection. The N.S.V. uses what is thus collected to feed the livestock and pigs it raises.

Should a housewife fail to have the can ready on time for the official collector, or if it is not clean, she is subject to a fine of fifteen pounds by the police. Both the *Hausfrau* and the owners of apartments are held responsible for the quality of the garbage and its accessibility for collection. Large industrial firms whose rubbish may be adaptable for stock feeding are also required to place their garbage at the disposal of the N.S.V. In serious cases of neglect offenders are liable to two weeks of detention, plus the fines.

To conserve supplies of barley and hops Germans are made to see by illustration what they waste when they drink too much beer. The areas necessary to produce hops and barley have been calculated, and the German is told that for each quart of beer he drinks nearly a square yard of land is necessary and cannot be used to raise vegetables or wheat.

Abstinence is not encouraged, however, as the 'Soldier of the Inner Front,' or German workman, is entitled to his glass of beer for relaxation after his day's work is over. Furthermore, he aids his country's cause by paying the war tax levied on all alcoholic drinks.

The *Westfaelische Landeszeitung* carefully showed in an article that the nutrition in a glass of beer is less than that in two pieces of bread, which cost only a twentieth of the average price of the beer. The same paper, urging temperance for economic reasons, said, "In order to produce one hundred quarts of beer nearly one hundred square yards of soil are required, so every one can calculate how many square yards of soil he spends in drinking during one evening of over-indulgence."

A textile trade paper qualified the exact necessities of Germans in war-time as far as clothes were concerned. The article began, "The minimum requisites that German men and women must have for their normal use are herewith described. We recommend that ration cards be issued only if the person in question has fewer than these items!" Then followed what the paper felt was sufficient—for men: three shirts, one knitted vest, three pairs of shorts, six pairs of socks,

six handkerchiefs, and two pairs of pyjamas ; for women : two dresses, two aprons, two slips, six pairs of stockings, three chemises, three pairs of drawers, two petticoats, six handkerchiefs, and two nightgowns.

Men are allowed to have two suits and two pairs of overalls, and both men and women may have two pairs of shoes and one pair of slippers. Each person may possess an overcoat and raincoat.

When the prospective purchaser comes to the shop to buy an extra new shirt he must bring one of the three he already has to be exchanged for the new one, so that he will not have more than three shirts. This must be done in the case of any addition to a wardrobe. If the dealer suspects that a customer is hoarding clothing and has more than he is permitted he must report this to the police and a thorough search will be made of the customer's home.

The textile paper's suggestions were immediately adopted ; and the same night the paper appeared with its suggested decree the official radio confirmed everything, as stated, to be law.

The farmer's lot, while not so bad as the city dweller's, still is hard. He has had to make severe sacrifices.

Because of the demands of the Army—much of the equipment is horse-drawn—German farmers have been forced to find other means to replace the animals drafted for military transportation purposes. *Der Schaffende in der Landwirtschaft*, an agricultural magazine, lauded the use of Germany's two and a half million cows as substitutes for old Dobbin, now in the Army.

"No reduction in farm output will be evident, even though the number of requisitioned horses is large," said the magazine, "and there is no reason why the cow cannot replace her predecessor just as efficiently, so that the spring ploughing will not be curtailed." The article did not mention what the results might be regarding the welfare of the cows who are trudging before the plough to-day.

Tractors are available, and many German farms have them ; but the petrol problem is so great that a farmer cannot depend upon his petrol supply to finish a tract of land, as he

never knows whether the filling station will have any to sell him the next day.

Because the word for 'bellhop' in German is borrowed from the French word 'page' and Germany, in her striving to concoct a wholly pure Teuton tongue, wants to eliminate any word that is not completely Germanic, the career of 'Buttons' not only has become prescribed, but holds a definite future.

"From now on bellhops will be addressed as 'lobby apprentice,'" said the *Berliner Lokalanzeiger* recently, "and thereby young men in the new 'profession' will attain both dignity and the respect of all who require their services." The 'lobby apprentice' undergoes a period of six months' trial as a 'bellhop.' Then, if he has done his work well, he may serve a year's apprenticeship in the kitchen of the establishment in which he is being trained. This is followed by another year in a special departmental service of his choice, such as that of waiter, hall servant, or manager of other lobby apprentices. Eventually he may rise to the exalted position of 'lobby master,' or, more simply, 'bell captain.'

The *Lokalanzeiger* asserted that it may be some time before hotel guests will accustom themselves to calling out "Lobby apprentice, get my bags," or, Here, lobby apprentice, bring me the evening paper"; but in any circumstance 'page' will disappear from the German language and the 'bellhop' gain the prestige due to a real professional man. Or so the Nazis hope.

Fifteen per cent. of all drivers who used to run cars before the war still have permission to use them. These lucky few, however, have been warned about using their vehicles for illegitimate reasons under the Nazi war-time regulations regarding when they may drive.

In Bochum a police chief deprived one car-owner of driving privileges because "he was discovered shopping for shoes and candy with the aid of his car." Under the heading "Incredible Abuse of Driving Privileges" the *Westfaelische Landeszeitung*, in one of its editorials, warned the population of Westphalia that similar measures would be applied against anyone found using cars for private purposes.

In Berlin no taxi-driver will take you to a restaurant or theatre at night, because he would have to pay a fine of five pounds for each passenger with him and a further ten pounds for using his cab at night for a purpose that is "not of vital importance to the State."

In Schwerte authorities gave the warning that drivers who go in cars to collect their permission cards for petrol purchases risk losing their driving licences.

I could go on indefinitely quoting regulations, punishments, and 'war-time stringencies' enacted by the Nazis. The list is without end.

During the first days of the Polish campaign we heard much of the Great War 'Von Schlieffen Plan.' At the time the success of the plan seemed highly improbable. Now it has become history.

In September 1939 I wrote :

With urgent necessity of striking a telling blow against the Allies soon, and the Maginot Line practically admitted as invulnerable, discussions of the old Schlieffen Plan as it was applied in the last war again are being heard daily in Berlin. Schlieffen, a German officer who spent nearly his entire life perfecting the military strategy named after him, built his plan with two ideas in mind, first to launch a smashing blow in the East, then to deal with the West.

He died before 1914, so never lived to see the mistakes that were made in the application of his dream of a perfect campaign to defeat two great armies and win a lightning war. Further, it is asserted by military officers that if the German generals had followed the carefully worked-out scheme the World War would have been won by Germany in the first few months of that great conflict.

The eastern principle was almost the same as the strategy used in Poland. An army was to descend on the Russians from East Prussia to the south, another from Austria to the north, and a third from Germany proper to the east. These three armies were to meet the enemy and crush him with an overwhelming force. Then all energies could be turned to a western front. Here the first slip occurred. Instead of France calmly waiting until Russia was defeated, she entered the war before the eastern plan could be completed. This meant that if the

Schlieffen tactics were to be pursued an immediate lightning attack through Belgium must begin at once.

In order to accomplish this, troops had to be taken from the forces in Russia, weakening their strength and prolonging the time allotted for the successful completion of this campaign. Nevertheless, the battle of Tannenberg was fought and the Russians eventually defeated. However, it was necessary, because of not having the required man-power, to draw troops from the west, which weakened the all-important right wing of the German attack through Belgium.

Schlieffen on his deathbed was claimed to have said, "Don't weaken the right wing, or you are lost!" This referred to the attack through Belgium, the other half of the general plan. The principle here was to sweep through Belgium with all the divisions Germany could muster, maintaining skeleton forces in the centre and left flank which extended to the eastern border of France and Germany. Before this was to be tried, Russia, in the plan, was assumed to have capitulated.

The younger Moltke, then Chief of Staff, was so pleased with the rapid progress of the advance through neutral Belgium and the comparative scant resistance offered that he decided to adopt another enveloping movement, making the move a double one—a two-pronged fork of attack.

Originally Schlieffen's strategy called for a strong force hurling itself through Belgium, cutting off the Channel ports, thus preventing English troops from landing, and holding a position behind Paris, cutting France in two. The second enveloping movement was started by Moltke into France from her eastern frontier, and again troops had to be removed from the all-important right wing. The spearhead again lost a portion of its total striking power, without which it was doomed to failure.

The rapid advance into Belgium and France fooled Moltke. He thought he had the French Army entrapped. But the French retreat and position was necessitated by the fact that the French had made all their mobilization plans with the principle of throwing an army eastward, and not towards Belgium.

While Germans rushed through Liège and Namur, held up but momentarily by the forts there, the French had to re-organize their entire mobilization plans and change troop-shifting orders from the east to the west. This took time . . .

two weeks in which the Germans marched on without a single serious halt. It was then that Moltke, probably dreaming of a second Sedan and 1870, dispatched men from the right wing to the second enveloping movement on the east border.

Another important factor was the fact that the Germans were stretching their lines of communication farther and farther away without allowing transport, munitions, and supplies to catch up with the hurrying infantry. Finally, when the battle of the Marne was fought, instead of the overwhelming force Schlieffen had reckoned on meeting the enemy, Moltke and the rest of the German High Command staff faced a determined French force with a tired, under-supplied army. Its vital striking power had been weakened beyond repair by the inroads on its man-power of the left-wing attempt at Verdun—the enveloping movement that was to encompass the great French fortress and Metz. Besides this loss in men, two Army corps had been sent from Moltke's command to Poland in order to save East Prussia from invasion by the Russians.

German officers say that it was the lack of these two Army corps that lost the battle of the Marne. If Moltke had stuck to Schlieffen's plan and arrived before Paris with the forces he should have had . . . if his advance had been more cautious, allowing his supplies to keep pace with the fighting portions of his Army, France would have quickly been at the mercy of the German arms. Instead, a second enveloping movement had begun, a movement that was to drag Europe into four years of bloody trench fighting, the siege of Verdun, which introduced trenches and eliminated open warfare.

Russia was fighting stubbornly. Other nations entered the war, and Schlieffen's sound strategy was lost because it had worked so well to begin with that Moltke over-estimated future results and ruined progress by deviating from the original sole principle of the plan. Turning from this principle, as Schlieffen said when dying, was to lose all. Strength lay in the right wing. When it was weakened the plan became useless, and four years of terrible war and defeat was the price Germany paid for Moltke's mistake.

The second time von Schlieffen's strategy was attempted there was no Moltke, no drive into eastern France, no Verdun, with its glorious "They Shall Not Pass!" The Polish war

was disposed of in plenty of time to throw the "greatest strength" into the right wing.

Two other dispatches I sent from Berlin in late September come to mind. Then they seemed routine stuff. Now both have become more than interesting in view of what has happened—first "Dive-bombing Tactics," and second "The Appearance of the Messerschmitt Destroyer Planes."

Here is the first :

German air fighters in the Polish war showed strong preference for the dive-bombing type of attack, this being the more dangerous method of strafing ground objects than the hedgehopping manner of attack generally used by other nations. In dive-bombing formations planes fly at high altitudes until nearly up to their objectives, then do a 'falling leaf' out of formation which turns into a power dive close to the ground. When the target is immediately beneath the ship bombs are released and the plane swoops upward.

In this method the plane is exposed to ground attack from the time it enters the power dive until it zooms to safer altitudes. In hedgehopping, on the other hand, the flier remains under the cover of trees and landscape until the objective is reached and bombs are dropped. The escape is assured by flying swiftly, just over treetops, so that in a short time the plane is out of sight because of the trees and the contour of the landscape.

Germans have many Stukas, ships designed for dive bombing. These are armed with forward machine-guns and cannon for counter-fire as they dive, and with after-armaments of more machine-guns to cover retreat to higher altitudes.

Military and air attachés in Berlin, while amazed at these tactics, did not expect them to be one of the major factors of France's defeat, a deadly innovation of the new type of war *Blitzkrieg* !

In Berlin I met General Ernst Udet, who is said to be responsible for the dive-bombing tactics of the German Air Force. I asked him where he had got the idea or, rather, where its perfection found its inspiration.

"I attended the Cleveland air races in your country for years," he replied. "At every annual meeting the United States Navy demonstrated what was called 'fancy bombing'



in the terminology of naval officers at the meeting. That 'fancy bombing' consisted of precisely the same things you saw our fliers perform in Poland. Yet the manœuvres were not standard in your Navy. They were regarded as tricks. The bombers were accurate, dropping their missiles within ten-foot circles. It was practicable and seemed suited to warfare, despite your Navy's rejection of the idea as 'stunting.'"

"How many times did you see this done?" I asked.

"I have been going to those meetings for a good many years," he answered.

The other dispatch I now well remember was a simple description :

The German Air Force now uses a new type of plane which is termed 'destroyer.' The ship has a cruising range of six hundred and fifty to seven hundred miles and flies at three hundred miles an hour at sixteen thousand feet. The model is named Messerschmitt 100 and mounts twin engines, six machine-guns, and two twenty-millimetre rapid-fire cannon, capable of shooting two hundred shots per minute. The cannon and four machine-guns are placed in the nose of the ship and are fired by the pilot, but are loaded by an observer behind the gun's controls, which extend under the pilot's legs. The crew usually consists of two men, but sometimes three are carried. Two machine-guns can be fired from the rear by the observer. These ships are used on long-range bombing flights and take the place of ordinary escort pursuit planes, whose flying range is much shorter. Frequent mention is made in Berlin newspapers of "destroyer planes" preceding bombing flights, to prepare the bomber's objectives by diving with guns and cannon blazing. They also serve as escort ships on long-range strafing efforts.

These were the first models of Messerschmitt's now famous destroyers. Since then there have been others built along the same lines, the Messerschmitt 110, 111, and 112. All the destroyer types were used in the Battle of France and later over England. Though neutral airmen say that the British Spitfires and Hurricanes are more than a match for the destroyers, many positions were taken solely by the terrifying tactics of Messerschmitts in France and Belgium.

The mysterious surrender of one of the Belgian forts, at the time reputed to have been caused by the use of gas or an unknown 'secret weapon,' has been explained by the Nazis. They claim that a lone Messerschmitt so demoralized the garrison in its dive attacks that transport planes were able to land within the fortress and compel the Belgian soldiers to throw down their arms without resistance.

## CHAPTER III

### SPEECHES, BATTLES, AND RUINS

WE stood in the hall in front of Herr Giese's office in the Ministry of Propaganda—Bill Shirer, Otto Tolischus, myself, and several other correspondents. After a fifteen-minute wait a fat Air Force officer came along, his leather overcoat arrogantly swinging its tail along the corridor.

"Unfortunately," he began, and then went on, after a glance at us all and a gruff clearing of his throat, "it will be impossible to fly you to Poland to-day. The airfield where you were to land has not been cleared of mines. Perhaps to-morrow the trip may be made."

He saluted, turned on his heel, and left us.

"I'll be damned!" said Bill.

Otto shrugged his shoulders. I felt the keenest disappointment. We had all been looking forward to this first trip to the battle zone. We were to have flown into the south of Poland, where heavy fighting still continued. At last our turn had come, after pleadings and promises had been made. And now the trip was called off. Shortly afterwards, in the Adlon bar, we discussed the possibility of leaving the next day.

"I think it's a phony," observed Bill. "They've had possession of that field for a week. It's a stall, and something else is in the air, or we've just been let out of our trip."

Otto said he thought that they would telephone the next day, expressed the opinion that what the Air Force officer had told us was on the level. I was dismally chagrined. Looking forward to the trip with some trepidation—I had never heard more than practice artillery fire on a small scale or seen anything greater than a sham battle in the distance—I had keyed myself up for the experience. To be let down now was depressing.

At the office Miss Schultz remarked that the same sort of thing had happened time and again. She was angry. The

*Tribune* had missed two other trips that had gone out to Poland in the last week. It was a certainty, she claimed, that we were being discriminated against. Nothing could be done about it.

In the midst of this discouraging atmosphere the 'phone rang. A message was relayed by a Ministry of Propaganda telephone operator. I was to report the next morning at eight-thirty. A group was being taken on a trip. We were asked where, and heard only the brief click of the receiver in reply. Unless the trip was worth while it was imperative that I should remain in Berlin to assist Miss Schultz. We called the Ministry of Propaganda. They would not disclose the destination of the proposed trip.

Fred Oechsner, Louis Lochner, and Pete Huss were going. So was Joe Barnes. That meant that the trip would include the bureau chiefs of the United Press, the Associated Press, and the International News Service. The *New York Herald Tribune* would be represented by its chief, Barnes. None knew where we were to go, but we had been told that the time would be well spent. Shirer, Tolischus, and correspondents from Hungary, Japan, Mexico, Italy, and the Balkans were all included.

The Ministry of Propaganda often indulged in this method of refusing to say where a trip might be going. Miss Schultz could take no chances. I would go with the rest and file the next evening if the story was worth while.

At eight-thirty in the morning we all stood on the Wilhelmplatz. We were labelled with yellow armbands and buttons. Each said *Berichterstatter* ('Reporter') in black letters. Assignments were made for the fleet of fifteen touring cars.

Bill Shirer and I were in one of the cars together. All the drivers were soldiers. An Unteroffizier rode in the first car with the officer, an Oberleutnant. The former wielded a red disk as a signal from the running-board of the first Mercedes. We were in Army hands. The column was brought up in the rear by a steel-helmeted soldier on a motor-cycle, gun slung over his shoulder.

The last word we were able to get the night before about where we were going was cryptic. All we could learn was

that we were going to the front. I imagined trenches and intense cold. Poland was not warm last September. Others who had been there at the time complained upon their return that night brought low temperatures. Also, I did not believe that a bag, no matter how light, could be anything but a hindrance. Ducking into shell-holes and creeping along communication trenches seemed probabilities. I took no bag. My toothbrush and razor were in my pocket.

I wore two suits of heavy underwear, a sweater, and a topcoat. Two pairs of socks, both on my feet at once, and a muffler finished off what I fancied was war correspondent standard equipment. If I'd had Richard Harding Davis boots, breeches, and steel helmet, they'd have come along as well !

Bill was not so well toggled out for what lay ahead. He had even brought a typewriter case with changes of linen and full bathroom equipment. I sniffed. He couldn't crawl round trenches with all that stuff ! He agreed that he might be wrong, but was chiefly worried about his clothing. He had not worn everything double, as I had, and had only a light raincoat with him. His winter clothes were all in Switzerland. Before we had gone far he regretted not borrowing extra suitably warm clothes.

I looked pretty formidable, bulging in all parts. At first Bill laughed a little at my appearance, but one of my topcoat pockets held still further protection against the wind and weather. I had thought to bring a bottle of Steinhäger along. Bill swore that it made up for the thinness of his raincoat.

The wind whistled through the tonneau of our car as we rushed eastward along the Reichsautobahn. Between huddling down into the seat and frequent pulls from the Steinhäger we both survived without frostbite !

We stopped only once between Berlin and Schlachau to refill the petrol tanks. Under Army management everything went smoothly. No time was lost, and when the cars were ready we were hustled into them without ceremony.

Schlachau is on the frontier. A mile or so beyond lies the Polish Corridor. After our long cold ride Bill and I were both tired and hungry. When the cars stopped in front of

an inn we climbed out of our travelling icebox with relief. We expected hot food and a warm fire.

But in the hotel we got our first taste of war. All that was available was black bread, tea, and *Schmalz* ! There was no fire ; we ate with our overcoats on. Otto asked if I had ever tasted *Schmalz*. It was strange to me—particularly unappetizing in appearance. It was placed on the table in an unlabelled tin. *Schmalz* is pure lard, with a faint sprinkling of meat that vaguely resembles minced ham. In the Army it usually replaces butter and is considered a luxury.

The others spread it over their slabs of bread. I said I didn't want any. Then, under the pressure of teasing from all, I tried a little. Otto still insists that I turned pale grey at the first bite. I managed to get it down, and then spent a miserable five minutes wondering whether it would stay there ! Meanwhile Otto and Bill covered their bread with the stuff and kept reminding me how good it was. Still hungry, cold, and disgusted, I managed to choke down a cup of tea and more black bread—minus *Schmalz* !

After refusing another helping for the tenth time—Otto and Bill kept the tin under my nose—I got up and went outside. The scene that greeted me eliminated all further "*Schmalz* trouble."

Here was war ! The street was filled with marching soldiers, heading east. Others stood at ease in the little square. Motorized anti-tank units went by, the mean little guns bouncing along behind lorries filled with men. Another column started moving the other way. It was composed of ambulances and captured Polish camions. The mottled camouflage, light yellows and greens, looked strange, mixed in with the dark grey of the German equipment. The rest of our party came out. No one said anything for a moment.

Then some one called attention to a company forming in the square. They had just received the order "*Stillgestanden !*" or "Attention !"

Otto said he had talked with their Hauptmann, or captain, who had just begun lunch in the hotel. The men would stand stiffly until he was finished. One of our group had been in the American Army during the last war, and he remarked

upon the countless times he had been held at attention while an officer took his time. We agreed that it was typical of armies the world over.

The Feldwebel, or sergeant-major, was conducting an inspection, strolling up and down the files with his notebook. Occasionally he would find something wrong. Then he would stop and shout at the culprit who had been detected with a button off or a spot on his uniform. His reprimands were far from gentle. After a minute or so of thorough criticism, interspersed with truly colourful personal observations, he moved on. One inspection was not sufficient, and as soon as he had covered the three ranks he began all over again.

Meanwhile the Hauptmann ate his lunch, and the men were occupied by their sergeant-major's kind ministrations, and whether he had made a note in his book. When he had not, the bawling out was routine. When he had the infraction was a serious one. German soldiers have told me, "Whatever we do we try to keep out of the Feldwebel's notebook. That's the worst place in the Army for a man's name to appear!"

Bill and I had a new driver, an N.S.K.K. man. Our army chauffeurs had been replaced by N.S.K.K. drivers from the village. The N.S.K.K. is the National Socialist Automobile Corps. It is uniformed and disciplined, as any other official Party organization. The first and last cars of the convoy were crowded with soldiers who now sat with their rifles unslung.

One trip that had gone out to Poland a few days before had had a bullet crash through the windscreen. The shot had come from a *franc-tireur* on a lonely stretch of road where several hours before a supply train had been ambushed by a troop of Polish cavalry. Though the main Polish forces had been pushed back to the Vistula by that time, and the armies in the Corridor had filtered down to Kutno, thousands of patriotic Poles still roamed the countryside in bands, sniping and destroying where they could. Hence the change in drivers and reinforcing of men in our van and rearguard.

The motor-cycle soldier who had followed us all the way from Berlin was augmented by another man. The two pro-

tected the rear of the column, riding a hundred yards behind the last car.

We left Schlachau as the Feldwebel in the square was conducting his last inspection. The Hauptmann, wiping his mouth, strode over the cobbles towards his company.

Our new chauffeur persisted in driving on the wrong side of the road. We ran off on to the left shoulder of the road more often than we did the right. The speed of our convoy had increased. Bill became as nervous as I. We dubbed the driver "Lefty Louis," and called him that for the remainder of the trip.

Soon we saw the first signs of war. A Corridor village near Schlachau had received a number of bombings. A house was completely demolished. A church steeple was stripped of bricks and mortar, leaving nothing but a twisted skeleton of girders. We made detours round several gaping holes in the street. The people moved about sullenly. I saw no smiles. Feldpolizei, or field police, were everywhere, their rifles ready for trouble. Two or three little shopwindows featured displays of swastika flags and pictures of Hitler and Göring. Here and there a child of German parentage gave us the Nazi salute as we went by. More often Poles stood and glared.

As we drove along Bill remarked with astonishment that the retreating Poles had failed to destroy anything that might have temporarily blocked the progress of the German advance. Bridges that could have been dropped into deep streams were intact. The road itself was totally undamaged. A high railway bridge that hung over the road and could have stopped traffic for a week before the wreckage could be cleared away had not been touched. Even telegraph wires were intact.

It was later explained that German armoured units struck so swiftly that the Poles were lucky to get away at all and had no time to do more than grab their guns and run. Tanks rattled along the road at fifty miles an hour, demoralizing resistance and driving whole regiments before them. The Poles thought they were the whole German Army. Before the retreating troops could re-form or find time to wreck anything German infantry had been brought up in lorries.



*Blitzkrieg!*

All the way across the Corridor we passed over only two bridges that had been destroyed and then later repaired by German engineers.

Our destination was still a mystery. The fact that we passed through Schlachau seemed to indicate that we were heading for Danzig. Bill was angry, as it meant that he would have to miss several broadcasts, or make them from Danzig, away from the centre of news or Press aids and sources. Danzig would be reached at about eight o'clock. There was no place to stop in between. The Polish villages we passed through were the epitome of poverty and squalor. Though it had grown considerably colder, we saw dozens of men and women tramping along the road without shoes or foot-covering of any kind.

The cars halted briefly. I asked about the peasants we had seen. An officer explained that they never put shoes on, even if they had them, until heavy snows fell. They were too poor to risk wearing out their only pair of shoes.

"It is the result of their eternal *Polnische Wirtschaft*, or the state of affairs with which everything in Poland is run! You see their farms. They are disgraceful, dirty, ill-kept, with waste everywhere," he expounded, and then, "The Poles do not as yet realize what a blessing this return of Poland to Germany will be to the people!"

Previously the Führer had talked only of what had been taken from Germany by the Versailles Treaty, the Corridor and parts of Silesia. Apparently the whole of Poland was to become part of the Reich. Bill and I looked at each other.

"You'll see shoeless thousands in Poland," the officer said. "It is typical of an inferior people. The Germans who have been held in bondage here by the Poles have done so much better, despite their chains of slavery, that you can always tell a German farm by its superior neatness and well-kept appearance."

Some of what he said was true. Some wasn't. Germans in the Corridor have done well. Their homesteads are better looking, their farms more productive. Later in the south of Poland, on the East Prussian border, and in the vicinity of

Warsaw I watched for shoeless peasants. Even the poorest had footwear. The only place where I saw Poles universally unshod was in the Corridor between Schlachau and Danzig. The officer readily told us then that we were being taken there. Bill cursed. Little worth-while news was there at the time—so far as we knew.

Danzig was blacked out. As we came into the suburbs groups of children shouted "*Heil Hitler*" in unison as we went past. We paid little attention, but after this had happened a dozen times we began to wonder. They were at every other street corner, each group consisting of perhaps fifty. Though it was dark, I could distinguish their Hitler-Jugend uniforms.

Then the reason for our trip to the Baltic city became evident. The children were waiting for the Führer's *entourage* to enter the suburbs. Hitler was expected. There probably would be a speech the next day. He was coming to Danzig from his tour of the armies fighting southward. The chance I had taken in coming was not in vain. Not only would a colourful ceremony take place, but I should get my first chance to see Nazi Number One at close range. Correspondents were always admitted to official speeches and usually sat close enough to hear and see with ease.

As we went through Danzig childish shouts of the conventional party greeting echoed after us. The fifteen big cars, with army insignia painted on them large enough to be seen in the darkness, convinced the Hitler Youth that they were welcoming their supreme leader. I heard later that they stood for eight hours without resting in order to scream "*Heil Hitler*" once briefly as the Führer's train of vehicles went through the city.

As Danzig began to fall behind Bill and I wondered whether we were to be taken somewhere else, missing what we had rightly guessed was to be the official freeing of Danzig. Signs everywhere proclaimed, "*Wir danken unserem Führer! Danzig ist befreit!*" We could make them out—great black and red letters against a white background. "We thank our Leader! Danzig is freed!"

At our request "Lefty Louis" answered that we were to

be quartered in the Kurhaus in Zoppot, a suburb a few miles from the centre of the city.

"That's not far from Gdynia, Oxhoeft, and Hela," said Bill. "There's still plenty of fighting there!"

I felt a thrill. We might even hear gunfire. Zoppot is about four miles from where the front was at the time.

The Kurhaus, a new, elaborate hotel constructed with a view to the comfort of its guests, had two candy-sticked sentry-boxes on each side of the entrance. The Führer too, then, was to stay here. We got out and went into the hotel.

At the desk we heard disappointing news. Though it had been planned that we should stay there, Hitler's party was so large that the entire hotel was to be turned over to him. Dejected, we piled into the cars again and were taken down the street to a smaller hotel. It was comfortable, but fell far short of the regal air of the Kurhaus.

We were given room-mates, two men to a room. All the Americans were kept together. I drew Otto Tolischus, Bill a young man who said that he represented *Social Justice*, Father Coughlin's paper. Johnson, as he called himself, seemed to me to be somewhat unpopular, some of us feeling that his presence in Berlin might be more than thoroughly sanctioned by the Ministry of Propaganda. So far as any one knew he had no credentials from *Social Justice*.

There were several similar cases during the first nine months of the war. Americans would suddenly appear at Press conferences, saying they were with some obscure paper in the States, stay a few weeks, and then hurry home with the Nazi side of the war.

Bill seemed to resent Johnson, but rooms could not be changed. He was stuck. As he disappeared up the stairs I heard him mutter that he hoped he might snore loud enough to wake the gods!

Otto and I went to our room. I noticed that he too had a bag. I should have enjoyed a change of linen myself. The hotel was warm, and my many layers of clothing were uncomfortable. I doubtfully asked Otto if he hadn't made a mistake in burdening himself with luggage. The trenches

seemed far away, and the hotel certainly was anything but representative of my ideas of a war zone.

I told him what I had done as I began peeling layers. He laughed, and then explained that he had made a good many trips in the past fifteen years and never found it inconvenient to carry a small case. He would advise it, no matter where one might go in war areas. I felt a little foolish ; but he was kind, and we both had a good laugh over my expectancy of hardship.

"Food you may not have," he said. "Sleep you may miss, but the comfort of a clean shirt is always yours—at least until there are no more in your wardrobe ! Then you might have to depend on the Third Reich, and the shirt situation thereafter grows perilous !"

We went downstairs to a very good supper, consisting of my favourite German dish—a really good *Wiener Schnitzel* with *Rollmops* and a piece of lemon on top. The table was crowded with uniforms. Foreign Press Chief Dr Boemer and Dr Hesse, an assistant, were lieutenants in the reserve. During the first days of the war Boemer consistently appeared in his uniform. Hesse had been, some one said, a private in the Service Corps in 1917, but since the Nazis came to power had mysteriously become a second lieutenant.

He wore a borrowed uniform of a shockingly bad cut and poor material. With his glasses, stature, and general wizened appearance he looked anything but military. As he saluted regular army officers I noticed them wince. His tunic stretched awkwardly with the effort of attempting a smart salute, he presented an amusing picture. But it was a military trip and he had to play his part, even if it was unconsciously that of a clown.

After dinner Goldwasser was brought. The liqueur is a Danzig product, made there for centuries. It is sweet, clear in colour, and filled with tiny flakes of real gold. I wondered about drinking the gold, but every one else did. No one suffered ill-effects.

In examining the bottle I noticed a Jewish six-pointed star prominent on the label. Over it was a fish. I asked a German sitting beside me. He was in Party uniform.

"Jewish!" he exclaimed. "Certainly not! The star is an old German sign. It used to hang outside inns all over Germany centuries ago!"

The star was unmistakable.

"It also hangs in synagogues," I observed.

"Impossible!" he snorted and turned away.

The firm of Krum Lachs is the only manufacturer of Goldwasser. In a semi-museum and drinking saloon the organization maintains definite proof of its Jewish origin. Old records of founders are contained in glass cases in the museum. The Jewish star appears frequently, and heads of the firm once were all Semitic. When I visited the famous old landmark I again asked a German guide with me about the star. My question greatly embarrassed him, but he stumbled over the same answer I had first received and changed the subject.

As we sat over coffee, Goldwasser, and cigars, the wind changed, and through an open window I heard a dull booming. I inquired what it might be.

An officer replied that what I had noticed was a battle in progress at Hela. It was possible to see the firing from a pier near by. Several of us stumbled through the blacked-out streets to the pier and out on to its end.

The sky was a faint red, shot with intermittent flashes from heavy guns. In three different places a steady glow lit the horizon. Villages were burning.

Occasionally the wind brought thudding booms. They came from two points—Hela and the open sea. We were told that the noise from the sea was the booming of the *Schleswig-Holstein's* eleven-inch guns. The training-ship, after levelling the Westerplatte, had pounded away at Hela for days, returning to Danzig only to refuel and take more ammunition aboard, and then sallying forth again.

We watched the battle for half an hour. Sometimes the firing increased until the sky was brilliant with stabs of white and red.

"An attack," said one of the officers who had joined us.

Hela was one of the last Polish strongholds to fall. After the field forces of Smigly-Rydz's army had all laid down their arms or were in full flight the little garrison on the peninsula

of Hela still held out. When surrender finally did come the Germans were surprised to find modern defences everywhere.

The heavy guns were 155-millimetre weapons similar to those used in some of the Hawaiian fortifications. There were plenty of new machine-guns, light anti-tank guns of a recent French model, and grenade-throwers to spare. Ammunition, however, was totally absent. It had all been used. When it was gone the garrison commander had no choice but to surrender.

The majority of the men under his command were young cadets who had refused to believe German assurances dropped from planes that the Polish Army had been defeated. They were certain that English ships would soon sweep along the coast and destroy the attackers. They had held out because of this hope.

Zoppot is a bathing resort where the season had just closed. Our hotel had been opened for our use alone. An English-speaking waiter was part of the staff. He had been in America for seven years and had returned to see his mother, who was ill. Eventually she had recovered. Although he was not an American citizen, he had planned to go back and take out his first papers. His ship was to sail early in September, but his passport was never returned and, a day or so before, he had received notice that his military service would have to be done. He has left a wife and two children in the United States.

"I shall never see them again," he stated calmly. "This war is far from over. I cannot leave the country. They will tell me nothing about my passport. I suppose it too is gone for ever.

Despite his troubles, the waiter bemoaned the fact that he must remain at the hotel while we went to the Danziger Artushof to hear Hitler speak the next day.

"My window is right above where he would pass, and now I shall miss seeing him!" he wailed. His chagrin was genuine.

The first thing every one had done upon arriving at the hotel was to put in a call for Berlin, to file a few words on Hitler's arrival in Danzig, and to report that he was to speak the next day. We were told that there were only two lines

out of the Hanseatic city to Berlin. Both were reserved for our use, but we must understand that the Army had first call on them. Danzig was still *Kriegsgebiet*, or war territory. Normal communication was impossible.

When I heard all this I changed my call from ordinary long distance to *Blitzgespräch*, or the fastest service. This type of call usually goes through within three minutes, no matter how far away the points within the Reich may be. Ordinary long distance takes from twenty minutes to an hour. A *Blitzgespräch* takes precedence over everything else.

As the hours went by we began asking what had happened to our calls. The military was using the line constantly. Our calls would be put through in turn, as they were made. Although my call went in third on the list, I did not get my original *Blitzgespräch* through until three o'clock the next afternoon.

I left word at the desk that I wished to be awakened at five the next morning. Perhaps another attempt might get me through in less time. During my stay in Danzig I put in four *Blitzgespräch* calls. Two came through, each after about twelve hours. The Ministry of Propaganda had promised that we should have ample telephone facilities, but had provided only two lines for fifty correspondents, and these were reserved for military preference.

September 19, 1939, so far had been the most crowded and interesting day of my life. More happened on that day that I recall with thrilling remembrance than on any other.

At five a boy had knocked at my door. At five-fifteen the whole hotel tumbled out of bed. A crashing reverberation had shaken the place, breaking several windows! A minute later it was followed by another tremendous boom.

Downstairs I asked what it was all about. The sleepy clerk wasn't sure. The Führer had not arrived when we had retired the night before. He suggested that the guns, for they were certainly that, were salutes in honour of the freer of Danzig. Other shots had been fired while I was dressing. It seemed as if two batteries were answering each other from different points along the shore. As I stood in the 'phone booth, struggling with my second *Blitzgespräch*, I counted.

Including those I had heard upstairs, the next report should be the twenty-first, and the salute finished.

What I thought was the final gun rattled the hotel ; a moment later the assumed second shore battery replied with its twenty-first shot.

I was glad it was over. Windows cracking and dishes rolling off tables, with the floor beneath shaking and swaying, was not pleasant.

Yes, the operator would rush my call through. No, she didn't know what the salutes were for. . . .

*Blooe*y went the twenty-second gun !

Then a salvo followed. I would not be too surprised if Hitler had decreed that he rated more than twenty-one guns, but the fusillade was misleading. At breakfast the teapot fell over, and cups and saucers clattered nervously while the guns doubled their intensity of fire. Otto had taken a walk before eating. He came back with the news that the *Schleswig-Holstein* was only a mile or two offshore. She had been closer and was still firing her main batteries at Hela.

We went out to the pier. Hela was a dim line in the morning mist. A plane was overhead. It was dodging anti-aircraft fire and spotting targets for the battleship. The vessel was drawing slowly away from the shore, firing from its forward turret at intervals. We were able to see the shells hit in the distance. Most of them seemed to fall in the water just off the beach on the peninsula. A few hit solid earth, sending up a mushroom of black smoke.

An hour later, with breakfast over, the guns silent, and the broken dishes swept away, we were assembled in the main lobby. Cars would arrive presently and we should be taken to Gdynia. There we were to see a battle in progress. An officer had arranged for a good vantage-point where we could observe the whole course of action.

He had just come back from Gdynia. It would be advisable if we kept our mouths open when passing along the winding road from Zoppot to the captured Polish port. Batteries were emplaced at close intervals among the hillocks that lined the way. If anyone had cotton-wool, it would be wise to put it in his ears. Though he had been deafened slightly,



he explained the noise was not unpleasant, but rather thrilling.

Remembering the battleship's salvos, I was sure it would be !

We got into the cars and started for Gdynia. A short way outside Zoppot we came to a wrecked building, standing beside shattered red and white poles strewn alongside the road.

"That is the old Polish frontier shed," explained an officer with us. "It was one of the first objectives of the Heimwehr of Danzig when the war began. They took it with little trouble," he added proudly.

Farther along we heard sharp crashes and distant machine-gun drum-fire. The road now was lined with removed barriers of twisted barbed wire and splintered boulders. We began to pass artillery emplacements. They were cleverly hidden in the hillocks, a gun here, several there, where space permitted. Their muzzles pointed safely skyward from the indentations in which they were placed.

"All plunging fire," explained an Oberleutnant. "It has been very effective, and hits by the enemy on any of our batteries have been infrequent. You may be sure that German artillery thoroughly understands the value of adequate cover. It is fairly quiet now, but shells are tossed at the Poles at regular intervals."

On the tail of his last syllable we heard a rending crash. A gun near by had spoken.

"That was a 105-millimetre gun-howitzer," it was pointed out.

Chills began to go up and down my spine as I realized that the shell was bound for Polish positions, perhaps would kill and maim a dozen men and tear a great hole in the ground ! Farther along another piece went off with the same crash. The effect was different from anything I had ever heard before. An old Army man later told me, when I asked what his feelings were when first he heard a big gun go off with strict intent to kill, "It was a good deal more than simply a big noise to me. Never in my life had I heard anything that spoke with more authority ! It was an entirely

new experience ! Though I heard plenty of big stuff go off in France, I never failed to get the same feeling—that of hearing something which meant deadly business ! ”

I felt the same. Crashes came from all sides now. They carried an entirely different note from cannon salutes or a Fourth of July celebration. These weapons were firing with full intent to kill—to kill as many people as possible with careful accuracy and absolutely no conscience ! None of us in the car said much.

A possibility swiftly crossed my mind. If the German guns could bang away at the Poles from here the Polish artillery probably could do the same. I asked if the Poles ever shot back.

“ They have made a few lucky hits now and then,” answered a Hauptmann with us, “ but as a rule they usually miss what they are shooting at.”

“ What do you mean by that ? ” I inquired.

“ Well,” he said, “ every one knows the Poles are valiant and brave, full of courage and what you Americans call ‘ guts,’ but, actually ”—and I was surprised at the English intonation—“ they are no match for German efficiency !

“ You see, wars to-day are fought on paper, with superior equipment and the most painstaking preparations. You may be absolutely certain that the German Army will undertake nothing that has not been carefully considered at long length by the High Command in Berlin. No detail is left to chance ! No item, no matter how minor, is shelved in the hope that those units which eventually face it may solve it themselves ! Everything is carefully planned.”

His words, kindly delivered, yet containing threats that we all refused to consider possible at the time, have been sadly borne out.

“ There are great things ahead of the Wehrmacht of to-day,” he mused, “ and German troops will not be found lacking. I have read American dispatches about the German Army. They do not give credit where credit is due—as you say ! ”

I wondered at his vehemence.

“ The world does not realize the might of Adolf Hitler’s

forces ! It has not considered the possibilities therein," he continued. "One day, not too far away, it will awake to the mightiest of armies ! The power that true force incarnate entails !"

He subsided. I had heard many such similar sentiments uttered by propaganda agents, and fervent Nazis, but this was from an Army man whose sole interest and life lay in the military service of the Reich. His enthusiasm stirred me. On September 19, months before the horror of France's, Belgium's, and Holland's erasure from the map of Europe, an officer foretold the might of Nazi arms. He did not do it to impress correspondents. That was not his job. He spoke honestly.

Excusably we curled our lips and refused to accept his theories. We showed it. There were too many of us who felt that the French Army was adequate to combat Nazi aggression.

Our reception of his observations did not please him. We were, of course, polite. Our incredulity was plain on our faces. He saw and was hurt. What he had remarked was clearly not for propaganda purposes. He felt he was right. Unfortunately he was.

The officer was a complete gentleman, educated in France and England. Related to the British King, and with years of military schooling in France, he knew what he was talking about. At that time France's defeat and England's peril seemed fantastic.

The crashing detonations of hidden batteries had been left behind. We were entering Gdynia. The newly built Polish seaport is an attractive city. Constructed on a pattern designed for beauty, it is an ideal community of universally white buildings and well-laid-out streets.

Every window we passed along the avenues of neatly patterned dwellings and business structures had crosses of tape on it.

"You see the window-breakage protection?" said an officer in the car. "That is Gdynia's only air raid defence. Except for shallow cellars there is not a public or private air raid shelter in the whole of the city !"

It seemed unbelievable. Gdynia, the most forward in culture and modern advancement of all Polish cities, the last word in Polish modernism, had not provided a single place where the inhabitants of the seaport might gather in safety in case of bombardment from the skies.

I could not help asking why.

"It is a phenomenon I do not understand," replied the officer. "This is the model city of modern Poland! It is unfortunately situated from the Polish national viewpoint. Warsaw knew eventually that conflict was inevitable. The Government was full aware that Gdynia was in a dangerous position adjacent to Danzig and East Prussia. Yet preparations consisted of a few barbed-wire entanglements across the roads and tape criss-crossed over the windows."

We were not receiving the canned, prepared propaganda of some one from the Ministry of Enlightenment, but the words of a simple soldier. He was not trying to influence us with prepared statements nor speaking in the tone of a conqueror. The wonder to him was the pitiable obviousness of Poland's unpreparedness. To a military man it was unbelievable.

"When we first took Gdynia," he went on, "we found things in such a state that they bordered on the ludicrous. There was not one air raid shelter in the whole city! There were no air raid wardens, no gas-masks! No one knew what to do in case of a concentrated bombing!"

"Luckily for Gdynia, it was not necessary to submit the city to large-scale air raids. I cannot understand how a Government could have left such a vital point so unprotected!"

"But the Poles are still fighting on at Oxhoeft and Hela," I said.

He looked at me carefully for a moment, and said, "You have overlooked something. The Führer arrived in Danzig this morning. Resistance from Oxhoeft and Hela has been determined, but so far these places have not felt the full weight of German might!"

"You indicate," I said, "that the Army has waited until Hitler came to take Oxhoeft?"

In Oxford English, prim and proper, he answered, "The

Army fights for the good of the Reich, and its Führer would never order such a thing. That he happens to be here delights us, but the Poles will not be attacked until the General Staff in the area feel it is advisable."

The correspondents agreed that the Army would not hesitate to make Hitler a present of what gains it might effect while he was in the vicinity. I asked several persons, military and otherwise, whether Oxhoeft would be stormed that day in the hope that it might be laid at the Führer's feet. Without exception they all insisted that the idea was execrable, unworthy of the German Army and Hitler himself. Yet it seemed a golden opportunity, too logical to overlook.

The officer who had given himself to frankness had suggested that was what might happen, but when pinned to facts had studiously evaded my direct query.

I tried to put myself in the German General Staff's shoes. Bill agreed with me. If it was possible for the armed forces attacking Oxhoeft—and it was the more accessible to concentrated effort of German forces available—the place would fall before evening. We were not wrong. It did. Though the position had been holding out for weeks under the most violent of attacks, figuratively, Adolf Hitler had it for dinner! It would be too much to ask anyone whether deliberate super-efforts were not made to achieve a victory while the Führer was in vanquished Gdynia and welcoming Danzig. That evening, as Nazi Number One sat down to supper after his speech in the Artushof, he was told of the capture of Oxhoeft and the surrender of thousands of Poles. I believe it came along with dessert, and was as certain as the night-fall!

We saw the beginnings of the attack. After we had left Hitler viewed the progress of the attack, and while he thundered in the ancient Hanseatic merchants' hall the full fury of the effort was poured upon the Poles.

Just before we filed our dispatches from Danzig a Ministry of Propaganda official discreetly warned us that we were not to indicate, subtly or otherwise, that Oxhoeft had been taken for the Führer's benefit.

"If you word your stories in any such way that this sug-

gestion is made," he threatened, "unfortunate pressure will be brought to bear. The Army does not follow the dictates of the presence of personalities—even though it be its beloved Führer !"

Somewhat disgusted, for the final capitulation of the forces defending Oxhoeft was certainly caused by a superiority of concentrated reserves from the air, sea, and land, we acceded to the request. Not to try to take the place while Hitler watched was too much to ask of any faithful military soldiery. And the Army was, and still is, solidly behind Adolf Hitler.

"Might we suggest that Hitler inspired super-efforts ?" I asked.

"Impossible !" retorted the Ministry of Propaganda official. "The Army as a whole does not even know that he is near by, or that he observed their efforts !"

"Very well," we agreed. "Nothing will be intimated of the victory as due to Hitler's presence."

"That would be most wise," smiled the one who had warned.

Ministries in the Reich can be kind and willing to give in to many things, but when an order comes from the top there is no deviating—not if a newspaper or agency wishes to maintain its Berlin representatives !

Gdynia seemed a place of ghosts. The town was full of green Gestapo police vans from Danzig, army lorries, and official Party cars. Behind us the guns still threw their metal towards the cliff to the west of the city. The rattle of machine-gun fire and sharp bark of exploding grenades punctuated the grim silence about us—for Gdynia presented the appearance of a first-class funeral.

The houses were, with few exceptions, undamaged. Evidences of street fighting could be seen, here and there, with scarred walls and black, ragged smudges left by hand grenades or bombs. The outlying suburbs nearest the German city had been the scene of bitter fighting, and many houses in these areas had been holed by shell and bomb. Then, before the rest of the city could be destroyed, the Poles desisted.

"Lefty Louis" brought up the rear of the convoy like the end of a thrashing whip—snapping from left to right! However, there was little traffic here—an occasional ambulance or motor-cycle dispatch rider now and then.

We parked at the foot of a hill which overlooked most of the Polish city. The officers with us suddenly became deadly serious. One ordered sternly :

"You will climb the hill to a point already prepared at the summit. Here escort officers will explain the course of the fighting to you. I must insist that you do not wander away from the central point on the hill. There is an observation post there, and the men will be glad to lend you their field-glasses, but you must not leave this position. If you do we cannot be responsible in any way! Thank you, gentlemen, and now we will proceed."

Half-way up the hill we were halted while a soldier went on ahead, evidently to see whether the spot was still considered safe. I asked a friendly Oberleutnant if we might be in any danger.

"It's always possible in the war that the unexpected may happen. We shall be in range, but I don't believe the Poles will drop anything near us," he answered breezily.

"Thanks," I said, in a low voice. Life had quickly become very, very sweet!

"Oh, don't worry," he replied, as we puffed up the hill again. "Germany is not interested in killing any correspondents. Besides, though you are in war territory and we take every precaution for your welfare, you might more easily get killed crossing a street in New York City. I nearly did once," he added soberly.

On the crest of the hill we looked over most of Gdynia. In the immediate foreground were several buildings flying Red Cross flags—impromptu hospitals. A column of infantry wound through the streets on the other side of the city. The day was clear. The battle was being fought two miles away, all along the hill that stretches round Gdynia like a girdle.

The rattle of machine-gun fire grew louder now. Rifles cracked, and artillery bursts could be seen half-way up the

hill. Things were confused at first, until a major, stationed at the observation post, began a brief explanation.

"Our present objectives are the cadet school on the hill in the centre, the wireless station on the right, and the village of Oxhoeft on the left," he said curtly.

"In the harbour just below us are German destroyers," he continued. "Off the coast behind us is the *Schleswig-Holstein*. Artillery, light and heavy, is behind the city. The regiment you observe on the far outskirts of the city will soon form for an attack on the cadet school. This it will have to accomplish alone. The artillery has other objectives beyond, as have the destroyers and the battleship."

The destroyers began to leave the harbour, moving at a slow speed in a long line. The major explained that their object now was to draw fire from Polish land batteries round the bend in the coast-line just beyond the hill. If the Poles could be induced to fire at the vessels their hidden guns could be located and spotted for concentrated artillery fire.

The hillside was dotted with puffs of smoke. A battery concealed behind Gdynia was conducting a preliminary shelling of the wireless station. The fire grew hotter as the Poles replied. With glasses we could see several German tanks advancing. Infantry followed directly behind mechanized equipment, crouching low for cover. They were momentarily halted, and then withdrew to try again a few minutes later.

A plane swooped over the Polish position, diving low and then zooming upward quickly. Puffs of black anti-aircraft shells followed in its wake. They were far away from the target.

"Reconnaissance," said an Oberleutnant. "The bombs will come later!"

The plane made several dives over the cadet school. Each time the anti-aircraft shots were far off their mark. It was explained that the plane had probably taken valuable pictures and located gun positions, which soon would be shelled. Another plane approached the Polish fortifications, but made no attempt to fly over them. It was spotting for the guns behind us in the valley.



Very lights began soaring into the air all along the front.

"Calling for artillery fire," observed the major.

Soon the air was crammed with waves of sound, marking the numerous explosions of the answering artillery. More rockets went up. The fire grew heavier. The entire side of the hill below the wireless station was bathed in drifting smoke.

"A general attack on the wings of the Polish position," said the major.

Just then the destroyers, a mile off the harbour's mouth, began firing. Even from where we were the din was appalling.

Overhead the air was filled with the shrill hum of dozens of fast engines. Bombers were augmenting the attack. They sped above us in formations of three, dived, released their deadly cargoes, and zoomed away again to repeat the process, this time with machine-gun fire from their six automatic weapons and two rapid-fire light cannon.

A deeper boom resounded from behind. We looked at each other as a whine came near and receded. Another boom, another whine, and two geysers of dirt shot high into the air beside the wireless station. Above the air was filled with the weird screaming. It seemed to be directly over our heads.

The major announced that the *Schleswig-Holstein* was firing its biggest guns. The shells were passing directly over us. The sensation sent more chills up and down my spine. The right and left wings of the Polish front were smothered in concentrated artillery and naval fire. The Stuka dive bombers added their hellishness of attack to the general *mêlée*.

Abruptly the cannonading stopped. Then it shifted to points below the brow of the hill.

"Oxhoeft will be a charred mass of cinders by nightfall," said an Unteroffizier thoughtfully.

As if to assure the truth of his words a column of smoke curled skyward beyond the ridge.

"It is on fire now," he stated.

Meanwhile the cadet school began firing violently, its machine-guns and field-pieces spouting smoke and death from the windows and roof. An Oberleutnant carefully followed the course of the attack. It was being made by the regiment we had seen deploying at the far edge of Gdynia. The officer elaborated on the regiment's tactics. In forty-five minutes it had captured the school, destroyed all resistance, and was continuing its advance over the hill into Oxhoeft.

From batteries deep in the Polish lines, shells began to fall on the outskirts of Gdynia. One landed uncomfortably near our hill. The major and several officers consulted hurriedly. Although they claimed to have seen several white flags from different points along the line, there still was plenty of resistance. The *Schleswig-Holstein* again began hurling its heavy metal over our heads. The batteries behind us added their noise and destruction. More bombers swept over us, this time double in number. A hit was registered on one of the German destroyers. They had drawn fire and replied vigorously with their deck weapons, three-inch quick-firers.

More shells fell in Gdynia. The major suddenly waved us down the hill. Though the intensity of the attack seemed to us to envelop the whole scope of scientific destruction with the possibility of little more being done, we were told that a few minutes later, when Hitler arrived, the Nazi efforts were redoubled. The Poles held on until nightfall.

An officer confessed to me that the German General Staff in that area had not before ordered such full-scale attacks since the Poles had been driven from Gdynia. Yet he insisted that the victory was not due to Hitler's presence.

"It seems to me," I said, "that if you had been able to crush Oxhoeft within a day you would have done it long ago. Or was it a matter of waiting until Danzig was freed in person by your Führer, while he was on the scene?"

He resented my remark, but that impression was so general that no one believed the questioned officers when they stated that the attack was routine and that no super-effort for Führer and Fatherland had been inspired by the arrival of Nazi Number One.

I told a naval officer later in Berlin about the shells of the *Schleswig-Holstein* whizzing over our heads. He looked extremely surprised and then asked me to describe exactly where we had stood, where the shells came from, and where they landed.

"You certainly took a chance!" he exclaimed.

"But why?" I demanded. "They went over us, and, even if we could hear them, they landed quite a way from us."

"In that case," he said, "ignorance was bliss! I wouldn't have been within miles of firing from the training-ship. You probably weren't told that the gunners in the turrets of the *Schleswig-Holstein* were Hitler-Jugend boys, none over sixteen! And that the eleven-inch guns they fired off Zoppot have not been rebored for years and are actually unreliable! It might easily have happened that some boy plotting the shots would, in his excitement, shorten the range a degree or two, and the projectile would have dropped right into your midst. Or the guns might not have been as accurate as they were. Then the same result could have come about."

"We were told," I answered, "that there was comparatively little danger where we were."

"I'll venture your escorts were not aware of the facts," he insisted.

As we returned from Gdynia the guns along the road were all banging away in strident chorus. More and more planes flew overhead, this time whole *Staffels*, or squadrons. The *Schleswig-Holstein* increased its fire off the seaside resort of Zoppot. Behind it all sounded the steady rattle of heavy machine-guns.

"The Poles are catching hell!" remarked Bill.

What we had seen was bad enough; but, with the pressure really on for the Führer's benefit, the rest had been mere sniping.

We did not stop at the hotel as expected, but continued through the crowded streets to Danzig. All along the road Party men in brown, Hitler-Jugend, and police were lining the way. Thousands had gathered waiting for a glimpse of Hitler. The crowds had been forming behind the regimented lines of uniforms since early morning.

I saw a number of N.S.V. *Schwestern* stationed along the boulevards to render first aid to those who fainted. They had plenty of work to do before the day was done. Germany had sent thousands of tourists into Danzig previous to September 1. Who they really were was now evident—loyal Nazis in brown suits, with daggers at their sides and Party buttons prominent. We were forced to detour several times because of areas roped off by the Gestapo.

Danzig had dressed itself in full Party regalia. Every house in the poorer areas had covered the sides of its window shutters with golden-lacquered frames. Above these were eagles of the Reich, and long streamers floated from the roof eaves to the ground. Bands were forming at every street corner. The brown of Party uniforms was universal in the crowds that waited. They had stood since early morning, people behind endless rows of police and Party men.

We went by the old Polish post office in Danzig. It had held out when the war began, with a group of loyal Poles within, until, grenades and machine-gun fire becoming insufficient, the Heimwehr troops had sprayed the shell-torn walls with petrol from a fire-hose. When they had doused the building with petrol a flaming torch was tossed at the structure. The resulting heat and flames brought the Poles out immediately in complete surrender. Buildings in the vicinity were bullet-scarred and holes in the streets were being repaired even then, stark evidence of the Poles' determination until the Nazis' use of flames.

Near the river we got out of the cars and embarked on a small motor-launch. The Westerplatte is situated on an island directly across from Danzig where the river is about two hundred yards wide. It was ceded to the Poles by the Versailles Treaty; they were to hold it, provided they did not try to re-establish the munitions works that had once stood there.

In the past few years not only had the works been rebuilt, but the island had even been thoroughly fortified. When the war began the *Schleswig-Holstein* had crept into the river and, hidden round a bend, pounded the Polish earthworks ceaselessly for days. Planes dropped countless bombs, and

field artillery from Danzig complemented the general attack. When the Poles had repulsed several forays by land and were still holding out desperately the Germans redoubled their efforts. Though the Westerplatte was far from beaten, ammunition ran out and surrender became inevitable. For ten days the Poles had stood against a far superior force, including the point-blank fire of the *Schleswig-Holstein's* heavy naval guns.

The Polish commander was given every consideration, and Germans who had taken part in the action had nothing but the highest praise for the bravery of the valiant defenders. This attitude was reflected officially as well, German newspapers throughout the Reich giving credit to the vanquished defenders, but blaming their officers for resisting and sacrificing their men.

Crossing the river, I noticed several houses on the Danzig side that were completely demolished.

"I thought the Poles had no heavy artillery," I said, pointing to the wreckage.

"They hadn't," answered an officer. "Some of the training-ship's shots were poorly aimed and, shooting from round a bend, did not attain a sufficient trajectory to clear the buildings on the shore."

Frankness usually can be relied on from the Army. The Poles had nothing heavier than anti-tank weapons, distributed throughout the fortifications, and were woefully short of machine-guns. That their resistance lasted as long as it did was amazing.

The woods, formerly thick, presented a terrible sight. They lined the shore and extended from the end of the island spit where the munition works were and where fortifications had been erected. No forest fire could have gutted them more thoroughly. No branch jutted out from a trunk that had not been sheared by steel. No tree still had its top branches intact nor now stood at its original height. Few had any bark left, and the ground was covered with splintered wood.

The first building we came to had been the commander's house. It was nothing more than a shell.

"It was not levelled to the ground," offered a guide, "because the Poles evacuated it early in the siege!"

The main earthworks had survived the bombardment well. Apart from an occasional exposed casemate, they had withstood most of the German steel. We went through the dark, winding passages of the fortification. It was heavily shored with thick timbers, except where space had been allotted to a machine-gun or sallyport. These were vaulted cement compartments with a traverse opening to the outside and heavy steel doors, cleverly camouflaged. Deep in the works were large storage rooms and the commander's headquarters.

Though the Poles lacked artillery of any calibre adequate to combat German superiority of weapons, they provided evidence of the value of machine-guns and anti-tank guns when under strong cover.

An officer picked up an object from the ground. "You see this," he called, holding up two bent spikes intertwined, and razor-sharp on all edges. "The Poles spread these through the woods you have just seen, the land approach to their main forts. If a heavy boot should step on one of these the spike would immediately drive through the leather as if it were paper."

The wicked little spur was so bent that no matter where it fell on the ground a point stood up at an angle of ninety degrees. "The woods were full of these," the officer said; "we have not had time to clear them all away. So please remain on the paths." Needless to add, no one deviated from his course behind that of the leading soldier.

Shell-holes, fifteen feet deep and forty feet across, pitted the ground between the earthworks and other structures. The Polish engineers had left an open space of some two hundred yards between their foremost defence and the fortified buildings and pillboxes. The eleven-inch guns of the *Schleswig-Holstein* were not able to shorten range sufficiently to hit the earthworks, and most of the shots had fallen behind it. A pillbox on the right of the main bastions had been hit squarely. It was a fatal few feet away from the fortifications inland. Now there remained nothing at all but a great heap of rubble and shattered mortar. Steel rods that had

reinforced the concrete stuck weirdly into the air, bent and twisted into odd angles.

*Arbeitsdienst* soldiers, young lads of sixteen and seventeen, stood in the clearing. With bayoneted rifles slung over their shoulders, they guarded several hundred Polish prisoners who worked sullenly with rakes and spades, filling in shell holes. The Poles glared at us as they laboured lethargically, moving their tools just enough to give the appearance of doing something.

Two Polish graves stood before a main building. Brown forage caps were on top of rude wooden crosses. Every one took off his hat as we passed them, and the German officers with us saluted. Three weeks later, when I again visited the Westerplatte, the graves were gone. I asked where they were. No one professed to know. The guides with us at that time insisted they had never been there. Louis Lochner had taken several snapshots of them on September 19. They remain, indubitable proof that the graves were there. Whether the bodies had been removed is unknown to me.

The main buildings were total wrecks. One, newer than the rest, had survived the fire fairly well. Though the roof had caved in and the walls were holed repeatedly, rapid-fire gun posts were still intact in the four corners of the building. These were in the basement, each with about a forty-five-degree angle of traverse field of fire.

Bombs had fallen everywhere. A large pillbox had been hit. Its interior was one of the most gruesome sights I saw during the whole Polish campaign. One of the heaviest bombs—officers said that it weighed two thousand pounds—had fallen alongside the concrete ramp. The crater it had made was sixty feet across and twenty deep. It had tilted the whole structure, smashed in the roof, and shifted the three-foot-thick walls about as if they were children's bricks.

We noticed a peculiar smell when we went down into the pillbox, climbing over broken slabs of cement and crushed railway rails which had served as reinforcement. A man had been cooking when the bomb fell. The tremendous force of the explosion had picked him up and wedged him between two of the heavy cement partitions. His body could not be

removed without blasting away tons of cement. Caught between the sagging roof and the tilted wall, he had been burned to death by the fire and ignited gases the bomb released. Bits of his uniform had embedded themselves in the cement around him. Blackened bones and flesh rotted in the half-darkness. The second time I was taken to the Westerschplatte he was still there, even more rank and offending.

The stove he had been cooking at was a tangled mess of rust, thrown into a far corner. Other men had been near him. There was nothing left of them but some smashed cartridges that had been in their belts when the bomb hit. A spoon that had been with the cooking equipment was driven into a cement wall ten feet away. It was tightly wedged, handle first, into the mortar. No one had been saved. The officer-guides with us asserted that twenty men had been wiped out. A dive bomber had swooped down to within fifty feet of the ground and released the bomb with deadly accuracy. The pilot received the Iron Cross for his deed. Fairly reliable sources later stated that the pilot had been killed in a raid over England, brought down in flames.

As we went back to the launch the khaki-uniformed *Arbeitsdienst* boys were spurring their captives to more lively efforts. Shortly after Russia's invasion of Poland, on September 17, the Russians shot a number of *Arbeitsdienst* soldiers by mistake because of the colour of their uniforms. At a distance one brown-garbed figure looks much the same as another. The Poles also wore brown. In Berlin special services were held for men killed in this manner, and Russia received several complaints from the German High Command, but brown-clad worker-soldiers still were killed from time to time.

Our special invitations to the Artushof to hear Hitler's speech read two o'clock sharp. It was now nearly two. Asking if we would not be late, we were told that the invitations were issued at that time only to be sure that the hall would be filled before the Führer came and that there would be no late arrivals. He spoke at five, the exact prearranged time. And the hall was filled hours before he left the Kurhaus in Zoppot.



The streets now were even more crowded, and large numbers suddenly burst into Party songs while waiting. The strident notes of bands filling in the time with military marches were heard all over the city. The Red Cross sisters had plenty to occupy them. Stretcher-bearers carrying away fainting women were a common sight.

Lunch was to be served for us in a hotel near the Artushof. We parked the cars and walked through the streets. Traffic was now impossible. The only cars we saw on the way were occasional ones marked Gestapo on the wind-screens.

At the hotel I rushed to a telephone booth. Now I had a real story to file !

Yes, the operator had a call for me. My second *Blitzgespräch* had come through. I would have to wait only a minute. Meanwhile I scribbled the outline of my story. There was no one at the office, as the *Chicago Tribune*, being a morning paper, receives filed stories at night, so I had called directly through to Miss Schultz's house.

I stood in the hot booth for half an hour. Then the connexion was made. Miss Schultz was not in, her maid informed me.

"This is Herr Raleigh calling from Danzig !" I screamed into the 'phone.

Her placidity worried me. Frau Klinder had more than once cut me off when I had an important message to deliver. At this point my German almost failed me altogether. She spoke no English.

"Where is Miss Schultz ?" I demanded frantically.

"Miss Schultz ?" she countered.

"Yes," I repeated. "Where is she ?"

"She has gone to the Embassy ; will be back later, I think," she said calmly.

"Tell her to call me im——"

The 'phone had clicked ; the line was dead. Frau Klinder had done her duty ! If Miss Schultz could have called me back she might have got much better service from her end than I was getting at mine. Her call might beat my *Blitzgespräch* by hours. But Frau Klinder took care of that. She even neglected telling Miss Schultz that I had called, believing that

the connexion had been a local one and that I already had seen Miss Schultz.

Grimly I put in the fourth *Blitzgespräch*.

After luncheon we started for the Artushof. Walking through streets that were solidly lined with brown S.A. guards holding back a silent crowd that watched us curiously, we approached the famous old hall. The streets were covered with flowers. The guards held ropes in their hands. The people waited expectantly, and every corner was blocked off with the silent, stiff S.A. men.

"How do you feel?" asked Bill suddenly.

"I can't quite decide," I answered, "whether the sensation is that of a conqueror or a prisoner. Despite the flowers and crowds, you couldn't duck off into a side-street if your life depended on it!"

"Make my vote 'prisoner,'" said Otto Tolischus.

Bill decided likewise, and before I could chime in that I agreed—I had been watching the brutal faces of the guards—we came to the Marktplatz. All the S.A. men we had seen were not brutal-looking, but apparently those closest to where Hitler would alight from his car had been picked.

Loud-speakers had been set up all over Danzig, so that the populace might hear the Führer's speech as they stood in the streets. The Marktplatz is not large. It is surrounded by gabled houses in the Danzig style, and is merely a slight widening in the street. A fountain stands in front of the Artushof. Behind it was a rostrum, elaborately built, in case the Führer wished to say a word to the crowds before he entered the hall. Two S.A. bands stood in front of the door. Their four cymbal players each held giant crash cymbals, four feet wide. A detachment of S.S. men stood at attention as we passed.

Inside the Artushof we had another half-hour to wait. I sat next to Pete Huss. A whole contingent of special Party delegates had to leave their seats and stand to accommodate the correspondents. They stood and glared from the back of the hall. Wounded soldiers dotted the throng, quietly talking and accepting occasional flasks from sympathetic Party men. A man near us had his right arm in a complicated arrangement of wires and plaster. His head too was swathed

in white. He looked as if he should have remained in the hospital, his face first going deadly pale, then bright red, and then back again to white.

I asked an S.A. man near me why he had been allowed to come, saying that he appeared to be very ill.

"He came to see and hear his Führer," was the answer. "He is very lucky!"

Later this man passed a flask of brandy to the soldier, who received it gratefully.

The hall itself is a marvellous old place. In Hanseatic days the merchants gathered there to trade and arrange cargoes, ship-sailings, and general business. The walls are covered with life-sized ivory statues of ancient gods and old murals depicting the glory of Danzig's past. At the head of the hall was a simple rostrum, backed by branches of pine and surrounded by a dozen microphones.

Lily Riesenfeld, the popular film actress, entered the hall and took a front seat. She was greeted by polite nods as she sat down. Lately wherever the Führer had appeared she was present, although there never has been evidence that he looks upon her with particular favour.

Nazi bigwigs from all over the Reich came in and filled up the first two rows. Apart from ourselves and Lily, there was no seat not occupied by a uniformed man. Representatives of the S.A., S.S., the Army, the Navy, and Hitler Youth filled the hall.

Outside a great roar echoed from a distance and gradually grew nearer. The occupants of the hall stirred restlessly. The Führer was coming. The crowds that lined the streets for miles cheered him violently as he passed. It was weird listening to that swelling noise of welcome. It seemed a thing alive.

The bands standing near the door struck up a crashing march with their cymbals clashing madly, filling the hall with martial music. Every one stood up. Jäderlund, a newspaperman representing the Copenhagen newspaper *Politiken*, stood next to me, nearest the aisle. Pete was on the other side.

Hitler entered. A forest of outstretched arms saluted his entrance, Nazi style.

"*Heil ! Heil ! Heil !*" thundered through the hall.

All the correspondents stood, arms at sides. Despite the popular conception that all foreigners are obliged to salute in the Nazi style when the Führer appears, I have never seen an accredited correspondent or diplomatic servant of the United States use the gesture.

Hitler entered, his head down slightly as if he were running over what he was about to say. His hand was raised in a half-arm salute that seems to be reserved for him alone. I never saw another Nazi use it. At official parades when he wishes particularly to attract attention the Führer uses a full-arm salute, but ordinarily he affects a combination of the stiff-armed, thrusting movement and upraised arm bent at the elbow.

The hall still resounded with '*Heils.*' As the introductory speaker stepped before the rostrum a new battle-cry swept through the Artushof; and as the people of Danzig heard it they echoed it along the lined streets for miles.

"*Wir danken unserem Führer ! Wir danken unserem Führer !*" The yell grew throaty and then nearly hysterical. From the streets outside it swelled to fever pitch.

"We thank our Führer ! We thank our Führer !" It rang and bounded from the walls. Hitler stood beside the rostrum, his hand in salute. At last, after ten solid minutes of massed voices chanting in unison, the cry died away to sporadic, shrill single throats. Then it stopped as Herr Forster raised his hand for silence.

Forster, newly appointed Gauleiter of Danzig since September 1, spoke briefly. He thanked Hitler on behalf of Danzig for its "new freedom," as he put it, applauded the Führer in sickeningly sweet terms, called upon the ancient city to acknowledge its rightful ruler and leader, Adolf Hitler, and sat down.

Again the hall and streets reverberated with the shouts of a populace apparently gone mad. Hitler stepped up onto the rostrum.

He waited patiently a moment and then nodded his head. The shouting stopped abruptly.

In a few words he outlined Danzig's history. He welcomed

it into the Reich, stated that it had always been his intention to return the free city to Germany. He paid brief homage to Herr Forster, to the Heimwehr, the Army, and the victories that had been won at the Westerplatte and Gdynia.

Then he launched into a bitter tirade against England, beginning softly, touching each event which in his mind led up to the war. An hour went past as he fanned his audience into flame. Then he paused dramatically.

Just before he made his famous statement about the terrible weapons that would eventually descend upon the British Isles the guns of the *Schleswig-Holstein* thundered not far away. The windows of the hall shook and trembled. It was a gripping moment—Hitler quiet, with his mouth and hand ready for a dire threat—and the windows shaking from distant gunfire.

He completed the sentence, ending on an accented syllable that was nearly a scream, pounding the rostrum with his fist. The guns roared again, putting a grim period to his paragraph.

The crowd leaped to its feet, shouting "*Sieg Heil! Sieg Heil!*" ("Hail Victory! Hail Victory!") For several minutes the hall was a bedlam of shouting. The guns still rattled the panes of the stained-glass windows, but they were drowned by the frantic cheering that followed the Führer's promise.

Then he made a second statement. Not only would England receive the full power of the secret weapon, but every bomb that fell on German soil would be answered by fifty Nazi missiles of revenge. Again the "*Sieg Heils*" filled the hall. Then, as if beautifully timed, a squadron of planes roared overhead on their way to Oxhoest, fast falling under the terrible attack the result of which would present Hitler with a new victory that evening.

I believe every one in the hall held his breath, and then a new wave of acclamation fairly shook the rafters. The rest of the speech was a series of sentences beginning in a low key and ending with a half-scream which brought the listeners to their feet as if by magic.

Whenever the intimated perfidy of the Allies came into

the Führer's statements the listeners cried "*Pfui! Pfui!*" When Hitler wanted enthusiasm, wanton urge to die for him, blind faith in what he said, he swayed his audience accordingly—played on it like a mighty organ. I have never seen an orator whose listeners were more in the palm of his hand, an actor who directed the emotions of his audience with more dexterity.

He finished by saying that Danzig too would aid the Reich in conquering a foe that had threatened German rights for centuries. The three great "*Sieg Heils*" that end every speech of Germany's Nazi Number One were greater in volume than all the others.

Immediately order was restored. The bands outside struck up *Deutschland über Alles!* Every one in uniform sang lustily. As the Führer left the hall his armed S.S. guardsmen closed in behind him; the *Horst Wessel Lied* was sung with ferocity. It is the Nazi Party song, and after such rallies its rather simple tones assume in the voices of the singers a barbaric quality that is chilling.

Hitler went out of the hall, his head high, his lips smiling.

Jäderlund, who was in the aisle, pressed after him. The long train of S.S. men had not filed out. He wanted to get to the post-office down the street, where we had been told our various calls would come through from Berlin. When the *Politiken's* representative pushed into the aisle Hitler had barely passed. One or two burly S.S. *Leibstandarte*, or bodyguards, were between the rash correspondent and the Führer.

An S.S. man grabbed the interloper by the collar and tried to shove him back into the seats. Jäderlund swung his fist, crying in English, "You son of a bitch, let me out! Keep your hands off me!"

Several of the S.S. men drew their pistols. It looked as if an attempt had just been made on Hitler's life. I was in the line of fire, rooted to the spot. Jäderlund never landed his blow. It was blocked by another member of the *Leibstandarte*, and he was held at bay by drawn Luger pistols. We waited until the escort had all filed out of the hall.

Jäderlund afterwards told me that he had only hoped to

get into the street and to the post-office before anyone else, so that his call might go through first. I told him I thought he had taken a terrible chance.

In answer he explained that he had fought four years with the German Army during the last war and was afraid of no "God-damned Nazi that walked." In Berlin I heard that he was one of the *Politiken's* most valuable correspondents because of the respect paid to him owing to his previous services to Germany. He seemed to have been born without fear. I saw him do other things equally dangerous, and his tongue spared no one. What has happened to him since the invasion of Denmark I do not know, except that he was in Copenhagen when the Germans marched in and that there was some resistance in certain parts of the city. I am sure that he was part of those stories, as he loved Germany, abhorred the Nazis, and always swore that if they ever tried to come into Denmark he would personally account for a few—to carry them to hell with him, as he put it !

Outside it was night. But the Marktplatz and all Danzig were freed from the blackout in celebration of Hitler's visit. Now the real purpose of the gold-bedecked houses, streamers, and Nazi standards everywhere became strikingly evident. Searchlights shone over the Marktplatz. Coloured lights played over the fountain. Several inches of pine branches strewn on the ground filled the air with a sweet fragrance. The bands continued to blast out military marches. The crowds shouted and laughed. It was the maddest, most barbaric pageant I have ever seen or could have imagined.

The gold-lacquered houses shone and glistened. The streamers waved in and out of the sweeping searchlights. The fountain, first blue, then red, purple, and white, cast shades of soft light over the square. The uniform medals dazzled and glistened on the brown-shirted guards trying to hold the crowds back. The cymbal players of the two bands outdid themselves in adding blasting crashes to the general bedlam.

Hitler got into his car, waving and saluting. The guards grimly climbed on to the folded top in the tonneau and adjusted their tommy-guns at the ready. Other cars followed

the Führer's, all the same as his—powerful six-wheeled touring models, specially built and painted light grey.

Pete, Bill, and I stayed together, with locked arms. The crowd around the entrance to the Artushof had already broken the ropes that had held it intact. The rest of the people in the Marktplatz were fast disintegrating into a swarming mob. Now shrill screams of pain could be heard over the constant shouts of "*Wir danken unserem Führer!*" and "*Heil Hitler!*" We were swept ahead of a running mass of crazy humans, hurrying after the Führer's car. A shot rang out behind us. It was not an attempt at assassination, but a nervous trigger finger in a pressing mass of people.

"Keep your feet!" shouted Bill.

We became separated. I found Joe Barnes running along beside me. We tried to stay together, but it was impossible. A woman leading two little children went down under the feet of the stampeding crowd. There was no time to help her, even to get to her. Everything seemed to be moving like a film run too fast. You saw things and then immediately they disappeared before a new conglomerate press of flushed faces.

I saw a wounded soldier fall, then another woman. Two men tripped. They never got up. A stretcher with a woman on it and its two bearers went under the feet of the rushing mob. There was no chance or hope of saving any of these. The street was jammed, packed with running thousands. Nothing was said of those who had been hurt or killed in the street leading from the Marktplatz, but the number must have been large. I questioned several officials, and was answered with a polite smile and the word "Impossible!"

Nearly tripping myself a dozen times, and fighting not to drop into the churning centre of the mob, I reached the post-office. Fortunately none of the correspondents was hurt. Some waited until the crowd had dispersed. They arrived half an hour later. Others, like myself, were simply lucky. Buttons were torn off my coat, a heel off my shoe, and I looked as if I had been through a rousing fight for the goal-posts after a football game!

As we got our breath we were given numbers for our



respective calls. Mine was number three. An Italian and a Jap were ahead of me. While we stood about wondering when our calls would come through I wrote my story—of the battle, of the speech, and of the recent madness of Nazi Danzig.

Thirty minutes went by and no calls. We all began to complain.

"Wait a minute," begged the post-office employee in charge of the long-distance wires. "Here's one come through now. It's number one!"

The Italian filed his story, taking a good twenty minutes to do it. A byword in foreign capitals is the length Italian correspondents deem their stories worthy of. They run to thousands of words, and, with singular exceptions, hundreds are printed. An Italian ahead of one on a 'phone is bad news.

Another fifteen minutes went by after the call to Rome was finished. Again we made a mass complaint, reminding that Boemer had promised that we should have no trouble, that the lines had been reserved for us. As if to silence us, the attendant proudly announced another call, this time to Tokyo. The Jap stepped into the booth. My number was three. I should be next. At the rate we were going I might even beat the news agencies as well as the 'specials,' as individual newspapers are called.

The Jap finished, bowed politely and retired to a corner to watch us quizzically. I still believe that he and the Italian had special privileges, as no more calls came through for the next forty minutes.

Boemer appeared and said that he had arranged for the rest of the calls to come through at the Kurhaus, where we were to be the guests of Reichspressechef Otto Dietrich. There would be only one line available there, but now both of those from the post-office were tied up with military messages. Oxhoeft had been taken. We should have to wait our turn on the single wire in Zoppot. I groaned as I thought of the *Tribune's* deadline. My story would have to be filed soon.

I knew that, with the 'phone arrangements out of Boemer's hands, precedence would mean nothing. Favourites would

get through first. They did. I finally reached Berlin with my fourth *Blitzgespräch* at two o'clock in the morning. The story reached the editions of the *Chicago Tribune* for September 20 barely in time. Miss Schultz had called Chicago long distance from Berlin. We didn't know whether the battle story had been printed until months after, when a newspaper of September 20 arrived at the office. The story had barely made the deadline.

Still fuming over our 'phone calls, we were driven out to the Kurhaus in Zoppot. Here a banqueting table was spread with half a dozen wine glasses at each place. It looked like a big evening.

Whenever Otto Dietrich gave a party for the Press it was always something of an affair. Following delicious Manhattan cocktails, the best I have ever had in Germany, we sat down to course after course of delicious food. Soup, fish, and *entrée* were all excellent. Wine flowed plentifully with each course.

From time to time correspondents would be called to the 'phone, remain a few minutes, giving their stories to their Berlin offices, and return, looking as if they had been at a pot of jam. As soon as their call was finished they would sympathize with those whose calls had not come through. Before they got to the booth interest in anyone else's communication problems was absolutely nil! Finally I got Berlin, sent my story, and returned to sympathize profusely with Otto Tolischus, who was waiting for a call to file pages of copy. He had to cover not only the battle and Hitler's arrival, but the whole context of the speech. At last he too got through, and we all settled down to an enjoyable evening.

Just before I drifted off to welcome sleep I went over the things that had happened during the day. First, the guns of the *Schleswig-Holstein*; then the actual witnessing of a battle; then the results of one, the Westerplatte; then the speech, the stampede that followed, and finally the banquet. A cycle complete!

The battle warnings, fighting, Hitler's threats as the windows shook, the celebrations, and the Roman triumph that followed. It seemed grimly symbolical.

In the morning, at breakfast, we were given a choice of returning to Berlin in two ways. We could either fly direct in a gigantic passenger plane or go back the way we had come, by car.

The memories of our previous icy passage influenced me definitely toward the comfortable plane trip. Otto advised against it. When I asked why he was simply mysterious.

"But you came the same way I did," I argued. "Why do you want to go back by car? It certainly was no joy ride!"

"Perhaps not," remonstrated Otto. "But why not come along with me? You've plenty of warm clothes. The trip's not too long. I'd suggest that you do."

"No," I insisted. "Enough's enough! I'm going back by plane!"

He tried to persuade me further, but the plane sounded much too attractive. Then I didn't know Otto too well. Should he ever advise thus again, I should never whisper a word of argument. He hadn't cared for the motor trip any more than the rest of us. But, instead of going directly back to Berlin, those who chose to travel by car were taken down to Kutno, where they saw more fighting and ended up with another spectacular story! Otto knew the itinerary, but was pledged to secrecy. No one else was in on the secret. He tried hard to get me to come with him, but I'd had enough of the windy Corridor in late September.

We arrived at the airport. A forty-six passenger plane was fuelling, preparing for our return flight. It was a four-engined Junkers, the very latest and biggest air transport, with smoking compartments and Pullman seats for all. We filled the plane to capacity, yet there was no evidence of crowding. Every one had his separate seat, with plenty of room to stretch out.

Back at Tempelhof Airport, we disembarked and stood dismally outside the gates, waiting for a taxi to appear. None came. It was the beginning of the taxi shortage in Germany's capital. At last I took a bus, homeward bound for a hot bath and a change from my double layer of clothes.

## CHAPTER IV

### YOUR SON WILL NOT RETURN! HEIL HITLER!

*I*N his Reichstag speech of September 1, 1939, Adolf Hitler told the world that German guns had been firing across the Polish frontier since 5.45 that morning. Four days later a brief, important message was received at the Bendlerstrasse Army High Command headquarters in Berlin. The report informed the Führer and military bigwigs that the Polish armies had been beaten and that the rest of the campaign was merely a question of mopping up. In ninety-six hours Poland's legions were at the mercy of Germany's war machine. Later officers of the High Command explained that the brevity of the Polish war was far from unexpected. Strategical plans, remarkable organization, and detailed intelligence reports foretold the inevitable result.

The full scope of field operations in Poland had been carefully rehearsed in the preceding summer's manœuvres. Military *attachés* who had been present at portions of the manœuvres asserted that in communications to their Governments they were able to prophesy exactly what occurred. Significantly, Polish military *attachés* were excluded from all phases of the summer tactics that indicated the true purpose of the practice operations.

The Nazi Army is not bound by the shackles of tradition. A staff officer stated that that was one of the cardinal reasons for Germany's lightning success in the East. "There are no objections to novel experiments, no hidebound departmental personnel who shrink at the ideas of improvements," he continued. "Untried conceptions of organization face no silent fences of disagreement in high places. When something new clamours for a trial it gets its chance." Because of

this attitude, the Army appears to be far ahead of other armed forces in new developments, unique organization, and fighting methods.

Nazis encourage wild stories of bombers that can fly at eight hundred miles an hour and guns with ranges that make child's play of the Big Bertha's feat of dropping shells on Paris from seventy-five miles away. In convenient newspaper columns these tales usually appear under headlines such as "Deadly New Military Weapons" or "Germany Promises New Type of Terrible Warfare." Such stories are ridiculous. Their real threats are none the less menacing, although hardly as spectacular. They have worked industriously in the past five years to develop the theory of conflict to fresh heights—or depths. To-day they are dangerous adversaries as the result of intensive training and extremely careful preparation.

With respect for past mistakes and experience as a stern teacher, the German infantry school has perfected offensive attack to a fine science. One innovation is particularly effective. The phrase "The damned artillery's dropping shells on our own men!" is familiar to most infantry soldiers who fought in the last war. The Germans claim they have eliminated this possibility to a great degree.

All infantry regiments have their own heavy-weapons company. This unit is equipped with guns, howitzers, and grenade-throwers both light and heavy, and moves with the regiment. The heavy-weapons company is commanded by the regimental colonel, and, except in rare cases, remains attached to the headquarters of the regiment, fire being directed from that point. No longer, therefore, must infantry rely in warfare solely upon artillery support from a separate organization.

Co-ordination of artillery and advancing troops from the same source greatly limits the chances of infantry receiving shell-fire from their own batteries.

The all-purpose German infantry regiment has more than artillery attached. Heavy machine-gun and additional grenade-thrower support is delegated to battalion heavy-weapons companies, which are lighter armed units carrying out

the same idea on a smaller scale as the artillery fire-power supplement of the regiment as a whole.

Battalion heavy-weapons companies are armed with twelve heavy machine-guns, six 80-millimetre heavy grenade-throwers, and six similar lighter weapons of the same type.

As a foreign military observer put it, "Now they've got everything with the foot soldier but the kitchen sink !"

He enumerated the supplementary equipment. "Two hundred-and-fifty-millimetre howitzers, several lighter cannon, a number of seventy-five-millimetre howitzers, plenty of heavy and light grenade-throwers, heavy machine-guns, and dozens of motor-cycle-mounted regimental runners. Add to this a complete anti-tank company of eighteen guns, special machine-gun carts to drive off hostile planes, attached chemical units, and you've got an organization that is self-sufficient for any ordinary attack."

All this armament is either with the infantryman or practically on his heels in battle. Infantry artillery around Warsaw was often within fifty yards of the actual contact point of hand-to-hand fighting.

Fire-power is the keynote of all infantry organization. Supporting weapons are incorporated into all units, even down to the squad. Profiting from Great War tactics, the German squad has absorbed lessons from all the armies involved in that conflict. The German practice of mass attacks—close-packed waves of infantry advancing in regimental formation—has been entirely shelved. The value of the individual soldier who can carry on by himself has not been overlooked.

Wherever German soldiers are fighting to-day their activity can be summed up in one word, 'teamwork.' Primarily, the squad illustrates the principle.

A squad consists of ten men and a light machine-gun. Three men serve the gun. One is detailed to carry ammunition and six riflemen protect the fire-power weapon. The squad is not disrupted by the supplying of ammunition. That is the duty of a single man. The remaining men insure the protection of the machine-gun and consolidate its position.

Let us review in perspective what we actually saw happen in part in an earlier chapter. At the battle of Oxhoeft, in Poland, an infantry regiment clearly showed its independence of other units. An officer at the scene of general action over a wide front described, step by step, the functions of an infantry regiment whose objective had to be taken without artillery support from the rest of the attacking force or the help of planes.

The artillery brigades available were busy pounding defences on the other side of a ridge that afternoon, and the Air Force was concentrating on the Hela Peninsula.

The officer called attention to a hill on which was a Polish cadet school. The buildings were held tenaciously by the Poles, and were proving a troublesome obstacle to the German advance.

As if in a classroom, the Oberleutnant explained the attack as it had progressed.

The regiment advanced in deployed order to the edge of Gdynia and the slope on top of which was the officers' school. The regimental heavy-weapons company split into two sections, one at each flank of the attack. The light field-guns and 75-millimetre howitzers commenced a devastating cross-fire, while the 150-millimetre howitzers, biggest artillery pieces of the heavy-weapons company of the regiment, laid down a destructive barrage on the road behind the school.

The barrage prevented reinforcements from joining the besieged Poles. The grenade-throwers of the regimental heavy-weapons company went forward with the infantry to within two hundred yards of the objective. Here they took cover and poured a steady stream of grenades on the buildings.

The heavy-weapons companies of the two attacking battalions crept closer, where they effected cross-fire with their grenade-throwers and twenty-four heavy machine-guns, twelve from each inner flank.

The anti-tank company of the regiment remained with the troops in the centre, ready to repel any Polish tanks that might make an appearance.

After an intensive preliminary bombardment the attack-

ing battalions began creeping forward by squads, operating on a ragged line, each ten men fighting as a separate small unit. The companies used light grenade- and flame-throwers in their sectors as needed.

Although losses were inflicted in the first stages of the advance, by the time the attacking battalions were close enough for a final effort resistance from the cadet school had dropped from steady, organized volleying and machine-gun fire to sporadic rifleshoots. All mechanized weapons had been silenced.

In the attack the Poles had received the fire of light field-guns, howitzers, light and heavy, twenty-four heavy machine-guns, eighteen heavy grenade-throwers, forty-two light grenade-throwers, several flame-throwers, and the individual fire of hundreds of rifles.

All this fire-power came from one all-purpose infantry regiment. The anti-tank company was not in action, and the reserve battalion took the position, mopping up with little trouble. This part of the afternoon's action lasted forty-five minutes. Two thousand Poles had barricaded themselves in the school. They had with them several field-pieces and thirty-two machine-guns in the buildings. These without exception were destroyed before the position was taken.

An adjutant who had been in the battle said that night, "The days of separate machine-gun and mortar companies have passed. There are still such units, but it is not necessary to depend upon them. No longer does an infantry regiment have to wait for artillery to establish communication lines and delay the attack. We can carry the whole show off by ourselves, as you saw to-day."

However, most divisional commands of the German Army have light, horse-drawn machine-gun battalions attached. These serve a twofold purpose—that of providing anti-aircraft protection for marching troops and that of supporting infantry machine-guns where extra weapons are desirable. The guns, 7.9 millimetres in calibre, are mounted in pairs on a cart pulled by two horses.

The gunner may swing them into position against ground-strafting planes by a single rapid movement, and can follow



the course of the raiders by means of an oiled swivel. The carts are distributed evenly along a column of marching men, assuring protection from enemy planes from vanguard to rear.

Every German division has its complement of field artillery. Before the war one regiment was assigned to a division. Now it is believed that two regiments to a division is the standard.

The weapon most widely used in the field is the 105-millimetre gun-howitzer. Nazi officers believe this piece combines the best qualities of the French 75- and the 155-millimetre howitzer. Known as a gun-howitzer, it is capable of operating in both capacities—as a field-gun, firing shells in a flat trajectory, and as a howitzer when the muzzle is elevated to a sharp angle and powder charges are altered.

The dual use of the piece was best illustrated in front of Warsaw. Several artillery regiments laid down effective field-gun barrages to cover troops advancing on the suburb of Praga. After the foremost trenches were taken the batteries moved up and began dropping howitzer shells into the city to silence Polish guns in the parks and squares. The flat-trajectory barrages provided excellent covering fire for advancing infantry, and the howitzer high-angle fire enabled direct hits to be registered on sheltered gun emplacements surrounded by high buildings.

An artillery Oberst, or colonel, stated, "It was advisable to take advantage of our gains immediately and begin shelling Polish batteries in the city proper. Instead of waiting until weapons of a precise nature, such as howitzers and mortars, were brought forward in sufficient numbers, my 105's were able to accomplish the howitzer task with no loss of valuable time." He said, in conclusion, "This double use of the principal regimental weapons helped to end the siege more quickly than was anticipated. As you Americans say, we 'streamlined' our field artillery, and both purposes of the 105's are best shown by the operation just completed."

Heavy artillery regiments are usually attached to corps. Their weapons are 210-millimetre and 40-centimetre howitzers.

Pieces of larger calibre are under the command of Army headquarters.

Foreign observers were astonished to note in the giant parade held in Berlin on Hitler's fiftieth birthday the appearance of a motorized gun of surprising size. The piece was either a 210- or a 240-millimetre gun, which is a much larger weapon than a howitzer of the same bore. Ordinarily, such cannon are railway-mounted, and are termed railway guns. None of the massive motorized weapons were used in the Polish campaign, but a number are said to be in service at the West Wall.

Many of the vehicles in the German Army are still horse-drawn. Although divisions have at their disposal units of tanks and motorized infantry, the rule, excepting armoured and motorized divisions, is horse-drawn vehicles. For the past five years Germans have bought large numbers of American Missouri mules. When a particularly big order was placed the purchase was made through blinds, persons who claimed no connexion with the Nazi Government. Otherwise the purchasers made no attempt to disguise their identity.

No mules were seen in Poland. The High Command had correctly reckoned upon appropriating Polish mounts and draft animals. Thousands of beasts were obtained. Poland is a famous horse-raising country, and at the end of the campaign most of the Army vehicles seen were drawn by squat, steppe-bred animals.

An informal staff meeting in Warsaw which included Generals von Reichenau and Blaskowitz, both of whom directed important armoured offensive movements in the Polish campaign, revealed one of the cogent reasons why the Poles were constantly retreating.

At this meeting Blaskowitz said, "If the Poles had had even a third of the number of tanks we used against them we might still be fighting in front of the Vistula. They could have met our attacks with enough armoured strength to hinder our flanking efforts seriously."

"But it was a simple matter, when we were temporarily held up," von Reichenau added, "to send flying columns of

tanks round the flanks of enemy entrenchments or pillbox fortifications. Once their rear was threatened by our mechanized troops, they had to fall back, abandoning what strong points they possessed."

The Panzer, or armoured, divisions and the motorized counterparts of infantry divisions have become the modern cavalry of the Nazi forces. How effective these divisions may be was seen in the battle of France.

Armoured offence is equipped to accomplish two main objects : first, to strike a heavy, unexpected blow at the enemy, and, second, to consolidate immediately the advantage gained by the spearhead of tank attack.

The Panzer division is ideally organized to conform with these aims. The division is composed of a tank brigade of two regiments, a *Schützen*, or rifle, regiment, a battalion of motorized artillery, and supplementary motorized troops.

A tank regiment is composed of two light tank battalions and one heavy tank battalion.

The *Schützen* regiment consists of one battalion of armoured cross-country carriers and two battalions of ordinary troop transport lorries.

Spearhead tank attack and quick consolidation after the weight of the sudden onslaught is felt have proved extremely advantageous in open-country operations. The tank battalions suddenly appear far ahead of supporting infantry troops and deliver a crushing blow on a flank or unsuspecting position.

Before the enemy can recover from the shock the *Schützen* regiment arrives, the *personnel* of the first battalion alert, with light machine-guns poked through slits in the sides of the armoured carriers. On the heels of the modern 'mounted riflemen' come the transport carrier battalions and the motorized artillery. The division digs in, and when counter-attack does come the Panzer troops are well prepared to receive it.

The speed of these units was so great in Poland that several brigades under General von Reichenau's command pushed ahead so far in advance of the rest of the Army that supplies and petrol had to be dropped from planes.

It was this type of *Blitzkrieg* operation that brought tank troops to the outskirts of Warsaw early in the eastern campaign. Scouting tanks remained active outside the Polish capital a week before reinforcements arrived and the actual siege began. The Poles for seven days were under the impression that the full strength of the German Army was just beyond the suburbs.

A motorized division is organized in the same way as an infantry division, except that all units are transported in trucks and the artillery is motor-drawn. All motorized troops, as well as horse cavalry and bicycle companies, are called 'Schnelltruppen,' or quick-moving troops.

An Army corps of 'Schnelltruppen' is composed of two motorized divisions and a Panzer division. Divisional supplementary troops, with the exception of a few squadrons of horse cavalry, are motor-mounted.

The principal weapon employed in anti-tank defence by the Nazis is the 37-millimetre cannon. It is mounted on a light carriage equipped with balloon tyres, and is easily man-handled. The gun can be fired and reloaded at a rapid rate, and possesses panoramic sights which are used much in the same manner as those of a rifle.

The anti-tank gun fires a shell of about a pound in weight, and is usually in action at short range. Gun crews are warned to hold their fire until enemy tanks are within three hundred yards. Then, as a soldier serving with one of these units said, "It's either you get the tank, or the tank gets you."

Waiting until the target is near enough for accurate shooting is nerve-racking work, according to anti-tank gunners, but it usually pays in the end not to give away the gun's position until the certainty of a direct hit is fairly assured.

The 'Pioniere,' or engineer troops, of the new German Army have kept pace with the other branches of the Wehrmacht in development.

German engineer officers point with justifiable pride to the feat of repairing the five-span railway bridge at Dirschau, in the Corridor. Although three of the great spans were totally demolished by planted explosives and the central abutments had become tangled masses of twisted girders and

crumbled cement, the engineers had made sufficient repairs in forty-three days to enable trains to pass over the structure.

Every known improvement and efficiency method has been quickly adapted by the 'Pioniere.' Their light and heavy columns of engineer equipment are master examples of compact thoroughness. And the officers, almost without exception, are capable of meeting construction emergencies without loss of time or wasted effort. The engineer officers' training school is said to be among the best in the world.

Illustrative of the spirit of experiment in Nazi ranks is the composition of the '*Nachrichten*,' or Signal Corps, battalion. Because of constant changes in man-power and equipment, it is impossible to state how many men compose a battalion or what standard *matériel* is within that organization.

An officer of one of these units complained. "One week I'll requisition supplies for four hundred men and forty lorries, and the next three hundred men and thirty-five lorries." When asked why this was he asserted that his branch of the Army was so impregnated with testing and new ideas that he never could be sure from one day to the next exactly how many men and vehicles were in his battalion. Then he indicated that the uncertainty of the strength of his unit was largely due to experiments with a new military weapon.

In pursuing the truth behind this a novel type of reconnaissance work became evident. In each battalion of Signal Corps troops is an intelligence section which is partially composed of motorized wireless direction-finders. The finders pick up enemy messages and locate their source. Thus the headquarters of a hostile division is established. Most wirelessly orders come only from a divisional headquarters. The entire disposition of enemy divisions along a battle front can be ascertained by this espionage of the air waves.

A German Signal Corps soldier in Lodz, immediately after the fall of Warsaw, described the efficiency of the intelligence sections by saying, "The Poles will never be able to understand why they had to move their headquarters six times during the siege. For us it was easy. We picked up

their wireless messages from the sender at headquarters, located where it was, and then sent bombers to make them move." Identical tactics were similarly effective in the fighting round Radom and Kutno. With headquarters continually shifting and steadily harassed by bombings, it is not surprising that the Polish commands lost contact with their troops.

To prevent the exposure of their own headquarters until it does not matter, the German Army uses its wireless only for the command of execution in an attack. All other orders are either telephoned or delivered by motor-cycle messengers.

Another story of a German subterfuge was heard in Berlin Press circles, but was never substantiated. It was claimed that valuable information was being secured by tiny microphones planted by night patrols near Allied outposts. Nazis boasted that the Berlin High Command received records of what Tommies and Frenchmen talked about in front of the Maginot Line. German officers who were quizzed about the story smiled and refused to comment. It was generally believed that the tale of the "whisper mikes" was either ridiculous or contained too much truth for the officers to remark upon its veracity.

*Tarnung*, or camouflage, is dear to the heart of the German soldier. Staff commands in the Siegfried Line believe they have developed the art of concealment to its highest degree. The general aspect of the West Wall is a series of pillboxes, which complement one another in machine-gun and artillery cross-fire. Miles of anti-tank traps and barbed wire interweave between the small individual forts.

Some of the pillboxes and gun positions have been built to resemble ordinary objects, such as houses or filling stations. Near Saarbrücken are emplacements that appear to be inns, farmhouses, and barns. But actually within the light wooden walls are guns of the greatest calibre. In contrast, other positions are so cleverly concealed that they are not visible except as low copses of shrubbery as little as twenty yards away.

German patrols blacken their steel helmets to prevent the sun from reflecting on the metal. A rubber strap is attached to the headgear, and in it are stuck branches and leaves.

When a soldier raises his head the greenery is deceptive and not likely to be noticed by the enemy.

Camouflage in another sense is not neglected in Germany. When Nazi troops were practising embarking and disembarking from ships round Hamburg and Swinemünde journalists were fed with the story that Hitler was about to launch an invasion of the west coast of England. Confidential sources assured newsmen that this was the purpose of the exercises. Until just before the invasion of Norway and Denmark the Press had little inkling of the spreading of the war to the North. The High Command could not cover up the daily drills of thousands of troops on the coast-line of Germany, so they allowed the story to circulate that England was the eventual goal. No mention was made of Norway.

The High Command Staff of the Army is an extremely efficient machine that operates smoothly, with one exception. Hitler has demanded giant offensives several times since last September. The Army has balked. Irately the Führer has forced his military plans on the High Command. They have acquiesced, but somehow just before the offensives were to begin the exact dates of invasion have been divulged to the Press through devious channels. Whether this happened by tacit agreement of Army chiefs or was the result of a leak somewhere is unknown.

Correspondents in Berlin claim that they knew about the thrust into Norway a week before Nazi troops stepped on Norwegian soil. On this score Hitler had his way, but Grand Admiral Raeder, commander of the German Kriegsmarine, advised against the move. It has been suggested that von Brauchitsch more than once did not see eye to eye with Hitler's conceptions of where and when the German Army should strike. Reliable sources intimate that upon more than one occasion von Brauchitsch and the Führer have had violent quarrels.

Von Brauchitsch's exact status to-day is something of a mystery. Though he still is regarded as Commander-in-Chief of the armies, some insist that his power and influence have ebbed considerably since his differences of opinion with Nazi Number One.

The Army approves of its Commander-in-Chief and thoroughly respects his ability. But should he be relegated to those in disfavour all ranks will follow the new choice as willingly. Discipline and regimentation assure blind obedience.

Before the war Germans used to say that the only way to keep properly fed was to join the Army. Then that was true in many ways. Although the German people were far from starved at that time, the pick of foodstuffs always went first to the armed forces. Since that September the situation has changed, but hardly to the people's advantage. Their rations are shorter than ever before in Hitler's Third Reich. The Army isn't getting what it used to, either. Admittedly the food is plentiful near the points of action; but its quality is not the best, and meat has become a bi-weekly dish instead of a regular part of every meal.

In encampments of reserves and units that are stationed deep within Germany the food situation is a serious one. An airman on leave from a *Staffel* near Stettin complained that the garrison received nothing but fish, potatoes, and cabbage for weeks on end, and that meat was a great luxury.

Another indication that the Army is not faring so well was the announcement that I. G. Farben, the Chemical Trust, had perfected a sauce that made fish taste like meat. This was in answer to complaints the Company had received through the High Command Quartermaster's Department. The story, as here stated, appeared in a pamphlet issued to Army cooks. The cooks were instructed to use the new *ersatz* sauce frequently as a flavouring extract. Thereby the men's complaints would cease and fish concoctions could be easily disguised, the cold-storage suggestion disappearing and the dishes appearing to be real meat.

The German Air Force supplements most army attack movements efficiently. Dive bombers, fighters, and reconnaissance planes are in constant touch with all phases of Army offensive and defensive activities. Artillery spotting by planes is in much wider use to-day than it was in the last war. All divisional staffs in the field have a liaison Air Force



officer attached. Seldom is an attack on a large scale attempted without complete Air Force co-operation. Many of the tasks of heavy artillery have been assigned to the bombing squadrons, as northern France and England, particularly London, know only too well. Distant targets are more easily destroyed by air attacks than by the use of cumbersome big guns.

The morale of the German fighting man to-day is good, and probably will remain so as long as food and supplies are available. Rumours of revolt in the ranks—at least at this time—are indubitably the results of wishful thinking. It is unlikely that revolution or mutiny will ever come from within the Army. Discipline and loyalty to the Fatherland rule with a stern hand.

It is said that relations between officers, non-commissioned officers, and men are better than they ever were before. The swaggering, truculent Prussian officer of the Great War has almost disappeared. The company captain is often referred to as the “father of the company,” and he is looked upon as such.

Nazis insist that *Kameradschaft* between the soldier and his superior is excellent. That is their story, and what was seen of the Army would appear to bear out their claims.

Discipline, however, is never overridden by kindness. Behind the Nazi effort is cold, calculating Hitlerism, the philosophy of which is perhaps best expressed in the notice a mother receives when her son has been killed :

YOUR SON WILL NOT RETURN ! HEIL HITLER !

## CHAPTER V

### TAVERNE

*BEFORE* the war the Taverne Restaurant was famed for its Italian cooking, and the *Stammtisch* was nightly occupied by the foreign correspondents stationed in Berlin. It was a veritable mine of information, as well as a favourite gathering place for Gestapo agents. Willy Lehmann was the sole owner and proprietor.

French, English, Rumanian, Bulgarian, Italian—in fact, journalists of all nations—met at the *Stammtisch*, the special large table reserved for newspapermen, to exchange news and either damn or praise the Nazi Government—depending upon what Continental dailies they represented. The Americans too had their opinions, but most kept silent and listened rather than express violent arguments. What one thought was usually kept to one's self. Many a time a leading statement cleared up a problem that never could have been answered by direct questioning.

So the Taverne became a regular stop after work was done, not only for the delicious international dishes featured, but for comparisons with other journalists of some news event of the day.

The restaurant remained open all night, and continued to do so after the war began, for the convenience of the correspondents who worked for morning papers. At two or three in the morning, with all stories filed, we would drive out to Willy's for spaghetti and what information we could pick up at the famed *Stammtisch*.

The main room was attractively decorated in a haphazard manner with flags of all nations, and with large pictures of Max Schmeling, whom Willy—an ardent sports fan—dutifully adored, with Italian statues, bad paintings, and clever caricatures.

A piano drummed incessantly in the corner. Facing the

entrance was a glass case with choice meats and cheeses. The cloakroom was crammed with railway posters, the most prominent of which was a large placard extolling the beauties of travel in, of all places, Montana! But that was Willy's. And as typical were the World's Fair posters, vintage of St Louis, and the Harvard and Purdue pennants hanging side by side.

No one who was not an accredited correspondent, a diplomat, or a German newspaperman was allowed at the *Stammtisch*, unless he went as a guest—and guests were few. There were too many stories to check and rumours to substantiate to invite some one who might gum up a careful inquiry. If guests were present they were told to listen rather than give opinions.

Immediately after the war began and the one o'clock curfew came into effect the journalists in a body petitioned the Ministry of Propaganda for permission to keep the Taverne open, to go there after curfew had rung.

Boemer, foreign Press representative for the Ministry, rushed the official approval through, and Herr Giese, fat, hard-working Nazi *Amtsrat*, or official, issued special licences which were to admit us to the now valued *sanctum sanctorum* after one in the morning. The arrangement worked well for a while. I had to show my licence several times. So did others. Then the love of graft inherent in most Nazis overcame the careful precautions that had been originally taken.

A delegation of Japanese, about fifty, arrived in Berlin. They quickly acquainted themselves with the Femina, night club well populated with ladies of the evening. When the Femina closed the Japs, being official visitors, demanded entrance to the Taverne. For a period the place was crowded with Japs and their girl-friends. Hitler earlier had said in a speech that, although Aryanism was the basis of German culture, the Japanese were distinctly apart from other coloured races. The Japs, he stated, would enrich the pure blood of the German, were equal racially in every way. The girls at the Femina were fully cognizant of the fact. So were the Japs.

For several weeks in November the Taverne resembled nothing more than a high-class brothel, except that there were no rooms upstairs—so far as we knew! There were a number of clashes between the Americans and the Japs. Although no interest was displayed in the women, the sight of a Jap pawing a white skin, his motives all too clear, sickened some of us. Then the olive-complexioned gentlemen, by this time thoroughly spoiled, would break into anti-American songs in English. Drunk, they refused to pay any attention to warnings from Willy, who wanted nothing more than peace in his establishment, and fist fights took place almost nightly during the Jap delegation's stay. Respecting Willy, the offenders were always invited outside. Though the disagreements were frequent, it was impossible to persuade a Nipponese of this particular party to take a little air!

When the Japs left to buy munitions at Düsseldorf and Essen the Taverne quietened down for a while. Then high Nazi officials discovered the place. Willy, humanly, could neither reject the very profitable business he had fallen heir to nor, understandably, refuse admission to some one who could do him infinite harm.

The result was that the Taverne became crowded from one until six in the morning. The correspondents still attended—there was no other place where a snack after one o'clock might be procured—but, apart from the *Stammtisch*, the place was a mob of singing Nazis, their women, and various and assorted characters whose probable working address could be named as Gestapo headquarters.

Arrangements had been made to maintain three taxis for the use of correspondents at all time. Petrol was doled out by Willy, who had special supplies at his disposal. I had to go to the Taverne every night, for when I had finished work no taxis were in the streets. I lived in Moabit, a district far from the centre of town.

Willy was making money hand over fist. Everybody who was anybody in Berlin began coming to the Taverne after curfew had closed other smart places. The *Stammtisch* still functioned. Oblivious to the raucous uproar round the special table, correspondents still made discreet inquiries

from Press *attachés* who had dropped in and from other Pressmen. More than one evening I filed several stories garnered from the talk at the table. Late events that just might make the last editions were often picked up. One morning I filed four stories after three o'clock. They came through a chance remark of a German journalist, the guarded advice of a foreign Press *attaché*, and the presence of a high Nazi personage. Everything, it seemed, had significance in war-time Berlin.

The Dutch correspondent, Mosdyck, was usually well informed. The Rumanian Press *attaché*, Dr Ilcus, brother of the Rumanian Minister of War, usually had confirmation of a story or a succulent hint of some coming event. The Ministry of Propaganda made it a point to keep representatives at the *Stammtisch* most of the time.

One evening, while we worked in the office at the Esplanade, we heard the booming of anti-aircraft guns. Looking out of the window, after first turning off the lights to conform with blackout regulations, we saw shells bursting in the west, on the outskirts of Berlin. No air raid alarm sounded. We watched the shells popping all over the sky.

Searchlight beams swept in hurried arcs across the night. We saw no plane. Later others claimed they had seen a plane caught in the beams. Dull, monstrous explosions boomed. At each massive report a faint red lit the horizon in the west.

Bombs! Still there was no alarm. People were hurrying through the streets below, in the Potsdamerplatz. Police held up traffic. Still no howling sirens. The shell bursts increased. Then, finally, everything was quiet again. People on the pavements stood staring at the sky.

At the Taverne, shortly afterwards, two members of the Ministry of Propaganda were questioned about the shell-fire. They insisted that the occurrence had been merely *Übung*, or practice shooting. Pete Huss and I firmly disagreed, saying that we had heard bombs fall—that the deeper detonations certainly were not heavy guns and that this was the first time a practice had been held so near the city.

We were laughed at, but continued to advance our argu-

ments. Every effort was made to dissuade us from our views. Our argumentative adversaries were so pointedly definite in assuring us that the shell bursts meant nothing that we became suspicious. Dr Froelich, then second in charge of the foreign Press in the Ministry, hurried to the telephone and was gone some time.

His assistant kept repeating that our claims were ridiculous. The more he jeered the surer Pete and I were that something was rotten in Denmark. Germany had been telling the world that Berlin was impregnable from the air, that no enemy plane could possibly penetrate the anti-aircraft defences round the Nazi capital. Others at the *Stammtisch* began to join us in refuting the story that the firing was practice.

Presently Dr Boemer came into the Taverne and sat at our table. We felt that Froelich saw the situation getting out of hand and had called his chief. Pete and I redoubled our arguments that the outskirts of Berlin had been bombed. Jake Beam, a secretary at the Embassy, offered the use of his car to go out to the district where we had seen the firing. We were sure we had heard bombs explode. Boemer, Froelich, and other Germans at first cried that that would be certain proof of our misinformation and conclusions. Then, after they had made other 'phone calls, presumably to the High Command, they announced that permission could not be granted.

Boemer returned to the table, perspiring from fifteen minutes in the telephone booth, stating that a plane of unknown origin and nationality had been seen and fired upon. No bombs had been dropped, he asserted. The plane had not answered wireless signals, and was assumed to be from the enemy lines.

Pete and I crowed enthusiastically. Frankly, we rubbed it in. The "I told you so's" resounded. For once the Ministry of Propaganda was figuratively caught on the hip! The sensation was sweet. Froelich and Boemer chose to ignore our jibes. We had forced the Ministry to retract a statement—a cardinal sin!

We never got out to the place where we believed bombs fell. It was near, or at, an aircraft factory—forbidden terri-

tory. Boemer nearly allowed us to go out to satisfy ourselves, but either the High Command forbade it or the damage was such that it would not be advisable to show to foreign correspondents just what had happened.

The story didn't end there. Actually five different versions were officially printed in German newspapers and issued by the "Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro," or accredited Nazi news agency. And these appeared on five consecutive days after the incident happened. We had filed a story direct from the *Tribune* office while we observed the firing. Ernie Pope and I watched the shell bursts from the curtained window with the lights of the outer office off—and relayed what we saw to Miss Schultz, who banged it out on her typewriter in another room. An assistant got through to Amsterdam on the phone; and as the final shots lit the sky I was at the phone, sending the story. The next five days we filed each official version of what the Nazis claimed had happened. The *Tribune* made a great joke of the whole affair.

First, it was a practice shoot; then it was affirmed that a plane of unknown origin had not answered wireless ground signals and was shot at; then a German aviator had become lost, his radio out of order; then an enemy raider had been discovered and was shot down. The last two stories totally contradicted the other reports. The fourth day D.N.B. stated that an English plane was destined for a suicide bombing of Berlin—"a lone fool," as the agency put it. Then the fifth and final version reverted to the practice-shooting story, saying that a German plane unwittingly had come into the field of fire and that the pilot had descended in his parachute as the fire was too accurate and he had no time to inform gun crews on the ground of his identity. Both Allied commands asserted on the first day that none of their planes had been over Germany on that particular night. Rumours hinted that the mysterious plane came from Russia, was reconnoitring—that a German anti-Hitler secret party had sent the plane on a mission. And, of course, Otto Strasser, famous anti-Nazi whose brother was ordered to be killed by Hitler, received his inevitable share of blame for the incident in unofficial circles.

After this occurrence the Taverne was studiously avoided by most members of the Ministry of Propaganda. Boemer still came frequently. His tastes ran to many and varied ladies of the evening and to flowing bottles of wine.

The Taverne was a queer mixture. Bawdy and boisterous, it still maintained its dignified *Stammtisch*. While the rest of the room was resounding with noisy piano and shouting patrons the table in the corner was usually occupied by journalists comparing notes, or trying to get a story from an Embassy *attaché* from the Balkans. Heinrich Hoffmann, Hitler's personal photographer, who reaped a fortune from his lucky Party connexions, came often, and was questioned now and then for an intimate low-down on what the Führer was doing about this or that. Politics seethed at the *Stammtisch*. Diplomacy was a primary requisite. One had to know when to argue, when to stick to one's convictions, and when to allow elasticity of views. Every nation in Europe talked guardedly at the *Stammtisch*. Intrigues began and ended in the Taverne. A salient political move might become obvious through a chance remark, dropped for the benefit of certain persons.

There, until Christmas, the food was the best procurable in Berlin. Willy Lehmann had the full sanction of the Ministry of Propaganda. If some one was short of butter or meat coupons he could always depend upon Willy. With plenty of butter, meat, and delicacies reserved only for important Party members at his disposal, he showered the correspondents with decent meals; there were no *ersatz* products, prevalent everywhere else.

But Willy had a Belgian wife. Furthermore, he supplied with petrol the three taxis that were always at the door of the restaurant for the use of customers, theoretically only for the correspondents who had *Ausweise*, or permission slips, for after-curfew visits to his restaurant. The taxis were there all night long. No one was supposed to be in the Taverne after one o'clock, except those who possessed the properly signed and stamped documents permitting entrance to the place.

Between the opinions, at the time, of Mrs Lehmann—she



was often most indiscreet and was repeatedly warned by many of us—and the liquid gold that petrol had become in war-time Berlin, Willy got into serious trouble.

Other popular night clubs resented his special after-curfew privileges. Taxi-drivers in Berlin were allowed 175 litres of petrol a month, or about two gallons a day. A frame-up was easily arranged. It was a simple matter to persuade a disgruntled taxi-driver, who was stationed at the door, to claim that Willy was illegally selling his supply of petrol, instead of giving the full amount to the men assigned especially to the Taverne after one o'clock. Other restaurant owners rushed to the police courts to back up the accusation. They knew all about it. Willy was selling his petrol at high prices to private individuals and taxi-men who had to use more than two gallons a day to make a living. They had positive proof. Also, it was possible that another restaurant would be chosen for the correspondents, perhaps one belonging to a member of the all-too-willing accusers !

Behind this were the sinister reports of the Gestapo on Mrs Lehmann's political views. Neither the proprietor nor his wife was a Party member. The claims of the other rival proprietors were listened to. They served a purpose, all that was necessary. The succulent, profitable plum that was Willy's, because of its after-curfew privileges, was not lost upon Party members in the Ministry of Propaganda. They saw a chance to turn his fat profits to ventures of their own.

Willy went to gaol. He stayed there for two months—his fate dangling on the tongue of his wife, who still persisted in talking angrily against the Nazis and the incarceration of her husband.

Her stupidity kept Willy in the city prison on the Alexanderplatz much longer probably than he would have been detained otherwise. For a while it looked as if he was bound for a concentration camp. All of us asked that he might be released, saying that we felt certain he had been framed. The Ministry of Propaganda assured us that nothing could be done. The matter was in the hands of the police. Meanwhile the Ministry made the Auslands-Klub available to the Foreign Press. The place was the former Automobile Club of Germany.

Food in the new "Klub" suddenly improved amazingly. Facing both Potsdamerplatz and the Voss-strasse, it was ideally situated.

It solved one problem, dinner ! But soon the attendance of the correspondents dropped off. It was impossible to go to the Auslands-Klub without immediately being joined by half a dozen Ministry of Propaganda officials. Though many were personable and pleasant, politics and propaganda salted every course. Several American newsmen stopped going altogether. Warren Irvin, whose views were openly pronounced on the slightest provocation, went once. He said he would rather eat boiled potatoes and cabbage anywhere else than enjoy a fairly decent steak at the Auslands-Klub. And Warren hates boiled potatoes and cabbage almost more than he hates the Nazis, which is saying a great deal !

Then the ultimate reason why Willy was in gaol became evident. The Ministry had long since forbidden the Taverne to stay open after one. No more taxis stood before its door at a time when, in the blackout, a taxi was worth its weight in gold.

Proudly the Ministry announced that another restaurant in a different quarter was to be made available to the Foreign Press after curfew. Taxis would be assigned to the door. It would remain open until dawn—exclusively for foreign journalists.

A few Americans went several times. Most of us didn't. We all felt an intense loyalty to Willy. Leaving at one was not convenient, even if we got away from the office early enough to get to the restaurant for supper. Hunting for a cab in the dark and cold wasn't a pleasure either. But the Taverne lost little of its regular patronage.

Willy had not been too wise before his arrest. One evening Ken Collings and I sat at the *Stammtisch*. I had got away early that night. Ken had introduced himself, being fresh from the States, by saying he was in Germany for *Liberty Magazine*.

Collings was avidly curious about everything Nazi during war-time. As we talked a commotion began at the door.

There was a thud, a series of rapid curses, and three men burst into the room.

The first was a red-faced, drunken anti-aircraft officer; the second, an official from the *Auswärtiges Amt*, or Foreign Office; the third, an under-clerk in the Ministry of Propaganda. All were well in their cups. They had just come from an unofficial party at the Persian Embassy. None had *Taverne* permission cards. It was a little after one. The doorman, following his instructions, had refused them admission. They had knocked him down and pounded on the door so violently that Willy had let them in to see what the trouble was.

The officer raised his fist, threatening Willy. The latter is not a small man and knows more than a little about defending himself. He too threw his arms into a boxer's position and, wisely, backed away. The officer growled angrily and started for Lehmann. The proprietor shoved him away easily, almost causing his opponent to fall. The others stood by.

The room was instantly quiet, with every eye watching the drama. The officer was in uniform. To strike or threaten an officer in full regalia is unforgivable. Willy had lost his temper—understandably, perhaps—but a sense of fairness is seldom incorporated into Nazi judgments.

For a moment it appeared as if the soldier would rush Willy. Then he recovered himself and came over to our *Stammtisch*, followed by his two friends. He was furious. His dignity had been insulted. Staying a bare two minutes, during which Willy refused to allow the waitress to serve the party any drinks, the Oberleutnant remained a glowing red. Finally he left without saying good-bye. The others stayed, pounding on the table and demanding that Willy should bring them drinks.

He paid no attention to them. Then they tried to get us to order for them. Willy came to the table and firmly told Ken and me that he would not serve us anything if we got it for the unwelcome guests. An *impasse* was reached, one most embarrassing to us. The situation grew most difficult. We did not want to offend Willy, nor did we wish to cause

trouble in the Foreign Office or the Ministry of Propaganda—there are many persons there who can easily say “No,” but are completely unresponsive when an affirmative is to be considered. Upon the newcomers’ insistence we ordered beers for them.

Again Willy refused to allow the drinks to be served. We hastily assured Lehmann that it was far from our intention to embarrass him, or interfere with rules, but that we found ourselves as stymied as he was. We realized the seriousness of his situation. One didn’t insult the powers that be in the Third Reich. Even if they were not bigwigs they still retained the privilege of comment; and Willy was not a Party member.

He was furious. Vainly I talked to him in the back hall.

“Willy,” I pleaded, “don’t antagonize these men. They are small fry, but they can do you a lot of harm!”

Adamantly he thundered, “This is my restaurant, and no one is going to act other than a gentleman here.”

“Gentlemen are few and far between in Nazidom,” I cautioned.

“*Pfui!*” he cried. “This is no Party matter!”

“That’s what you think!” I answered, angry at his stubbornness.

When I got back to the table the two young men were making dangerous threats. One said ominously that Willy had not heard the last of what had happened. The remark would have sounded silly anywhere but in Germany! There was no question but that the proprietor was completely right in his measures, but unfortunately he was not in a position to stand behind them. When the story was repeated at the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Propaganda, as well as in Army circles, there would be no one to support the restaurant proprietor with the Belgian wife who couldn’t keep her mouth shut!

I tried to point this out to Willy, but he repeated again and again that he had plenty of influential friends.

“Yes,” I said, “friends that would run a million miles if you got into trouble! Don’t ever fool yourself that they would step into the breach if a real complaint were filed

against you, or if you suddenly found yourself on the carpet on some trumped-up charge. They've their own skins to look after ! ”

My arguments were useless. Willy would not serve the intruders drinks. They made quite a point of it, threatening and then saying that he had embarrassed them before foreigners, had thrown a shadow over the Government before representatives of the foreign Press. Later I heard that they had been soundly reprimanded, but not before they had added strong hints of Willy's non-Nazi attitude.

Actually Lehmann was quite a diplomat. He loves Germany and adheres to the Nazi Party. Though not a member, to my knowledge he has never betrayed an opinion—if he possesses such ! But before two young men, deeply steeped in what they chose to regard as dignity, their Party loyalty, and their Government, he, as an older man, under suspicion anyway, as are all persons not Party members, should not have acted in a way to insult them. That there were other persons in the Taverne at the time—as well as those sitting at the sacred *Stammtisch*—never entered their minds. The only thing that was cardinal to them was that everywhere else, being connected with the Government, they were given special consideration. Willy hadn't done this. From his standpoint they were objectionable, and Party interests or loyalty never entered his head.

Finally, after subjecting Ken and me to more embarrassing moments, while they practically demanded that we should buy them drinks so that Willy would be forced to serve them, they left. Shortly after this Willy went to prison, and, although there is no proof, I'm certain that the individuals in question did not hesitate to use their influence when Willy's fate was being determined. The foreign Press well knew that Lehmann had not had a fair deal—that he had been deliberately framed. We testified unofficially—all we could do—but to no avail.

The officer who had conducted himself in an ungentlemanly manner never entered the Taverne again. Others of his branch of the service made a point of avoiding the place ; and where hitherto uniforms had been frequent among the

customers few were seen after the incident. I questioned a cavalry officer friend of mine who knew the commissioned offender mentioned. The first query he blurted out was whether the man was in uniform. When I replied that he definitely was my friend was shocked.

"But that's impossible!" he cried. "The man is an officer, has been for years; he should know better! That sort of thing might happen if he had not his regimentals on, but with them—well, it seems unbelievable!"

Upon confirmation my friend insisted that the incident was unusual in the extreme. The man, he said, was a gentleman. When he heard from other places that the story was true he was ashamed of his brother officer. Then he assured me that others had heard—not himself—that disciplinary measures would be taken.

A month after the happening the officer in question was advanced a rank—to Hauptmann, or captain—and attached to general headquarters. No disciplinary steps were taken. I again asked my friend why this had happened. He could give no answer.

In desperation, and flushing, he explained, "He has many friends in the Party!"

The gentleman to whom I had related the story is of the old German officer school. Many of his type are in the present Nazi Army. They are fighters, soldiers and, for the most part, gentlemen. That one of their class should have disgraced himself was unthinkable, and then to go scot-free, with the only visible award being an advance in rank and a cherished appointment, was bitter.

Though none of these older reserve officers would raise a voice against Party principles, so called, they deplored one of their number's acting in a bad rôle.

Out of uniform anything went, but to disgrace the grey-green they wore—it still is Germany's grey-green to them, whether under Hitler or the Kaiser—was unforgivable.

I said nothing about the actions of S.S. officers in Poland, as well as in Berlin, and the rest of the Reich. However, it is hardly fair to compare the old-style German reserve officer with the new S.S. man. Their codes are different, their whole

mental equipment from a separate mould. The S.S. men are trained for brutality from their teens. They get 'em young, while the German officer of the last war was not, on the whole, greatly different from other officers of enemy nations. They were, and are, fervently patriotic and faithful unto death, but they do not champion the cause of wanton brute force for that force's sake !

Another evening in the Taverne I ran into Max Schmeling. The boxer was on a brief visit to Berlin from his estate outside the German capital. He had been away on a long trip southward to Spain.

We had had a query from the *New York Daily News* about him and the war, whether he had been called for military service, whether he was still boxing, and if Sari Ondre, his film-star wife, was with him.

I introduced myself, told him I knew several of his friends from the *Daily News* and the *New York Journal* in New York. He was cordial and happy to talk to me. Almost childishly eager, he inquired about acquaintances of his in Madison Square Garden, and of other old friends. I supplied him with what information I had about old cronies, and then asked him where he had been, and why.

"I have been in Spain," he said, "collecting background pictures for my wife's new movie production, the setting of which is Spain. It was very interesting and I got many splendid shots."

"Are you eligible for the Army?" I queried.

"Yes," he replied, "but I have not been called. If I should be—well, I shall have to go. So far I have had no official notification."

"Have you thought of volunteering?"

He smiled slowly. "No man in his right mind thinks of volunteering for war," he answered. "I am certainly willing to go if the call comes, but not before!"

Something puzzled me. Why should Max be down in Spain taking background shots? So far as I knew, what photography he had studied was purely amateur. If the film company that produced Sari's pictures wanted 'montages' from Spain they surely had competent technicians to send

—if everything needed was not already in their studio library.

I asked blankly how long it had been since he had gone in for the movies instead of prize-fighting. His explanations seemed feeble.

We sent the story as requested by the *New York News*, but the entire tale never was relayed by cable. Max actually had been in Spain to discover whether he and Sari, though she was still in Berlin, might arrange a passage on an American Clipper plane which would not stop at Bermuda. Then the transatlantic planes called there only if the weather was bad from that point onward. Also, in Bermuda, mail was sorted and censored. If Max could be certain that he and his wife might catch a plane that would make no weather stop at Bermuda he felt he could land in the United States without danger of internment from the British. Other stories went the rounds—one that he was making secret arrangements to flee to the Azores, where Sari and he would wait until a plane with clear weather ahead would land them on Long Island, non-stop.

He wanted another crack at Joe Louis, and explaining his chances took up the rest of the impromptu interview.

He asked that I should repeat a statement, "When the war's over, you'll see what will happen to Joe when I meet him in the Garden; but meanwhile give my best regards to all my American friends and tell them that I'll be back!"



## CHAPTER VI

### REVOLUTION-HUNTING !

*REUTERS*, the English news agency, had circulated a report in November 1939 that the Protectorate was in an active state of revolt ; that there had been many deaths in Prague, Pilsen, and Brünn ; and that constant fighting was going on throughout Nazi-controlled Czecho-Slovakia. These English dispatches were treated with disdain in Berlin. At Press conferences official spokesmen emphatically denied that there was trouble in the south. Still, many of us persisted in asking embarrassing questions upon queries from our papers, who were giving the story tremendous publicity at home.

It was announced that a Ministry of Propaganda trip to the Protectorate would take place in a day or so to disprove the British contention of strife among the Czechs.

Boemer, the Foreign Press Chief, said, "The English agency reports border on the ridiculous ! You will be taken to the Protectorate and allowed to talk with anyone and see anything you like. Then, when you return, tell your papers exactly what you saw !

"Of course," he added, "everything there is not what might be called entirely adjusted. The Czechs are fast seeing our views, and the majority welcome German protection and the revival of German culture. But there are some who are dissatisfied. They may tell you things—say outright that they mourn the death of their democracy, and accuse us of various methods of enforcing our prerogative, which they will, no doubt, greatly exaggerate. You, however, must understand that a whole people cannot absorb National Socialism without certain birth-pangs."

With this warning we set out the next day for Czecho-Slovakia, or, as it now ironically is named, The Protectorate.

To the border, through what is called "Little Switzerland," the journey was uneventful, excepting the charming beauty

of the scenery. "Little Switzerland" is, indeed, properly named. It is a region of rough, mountainous country dotted with chalets and castles crowning miniature peaks. The Ore Mountains are small editions of the Alps, complete in all but snowy tops. The route of the railway line from Berlin to Prague follows the Elbe river, which winds and twists amid the jutting peaks pointed briefly at the sky.

At the frontier we waited some minutes while both Czech and German customs guards went through the train. We, as official guests of the Reich, were excluded from examination. The duties of the guards seemed to be perfunctory, with the Czechs always subservient to their Nazi superiors. Rank made no difference. I noticed that nothing was done by the Czechs that was not first carefully O.K.'d by a German guard. A young Nazi customs man brushed a much older Czech aside, rudely grabbing the papers the latter was examining. The younger one was several grades lower in rank than the other.

Patiently the Czech waited until the German had glanced over the papers. They apparently were in order, and the Nazi's perusal of them was unnecessary ; but to me it seemed that the German could not resist flaunting his position and indicating exactly who was the underdog.

The Czech received the papers back from the German, who shoved them at him with a jerky, impatient gesture. Apologizing to the man—he was neither Czech nor German whose papers were being examined for the delay, the Czech passed on to another. Though all looked to be in order, I again saw the young German stride up to the older man and snatch a passport from him, run through the pages hurriedly, and toss it back at the Czech.

I inquired from what part of the country the Czech came, and was told that he was not a Sudetenländer. He did not seem to be humiliated, and to me appeared the soul of patience in a situation that must have been galling in the extreme.

Perhaps his conduct might be said to be typical of a vast number of Czechs who have become acquiescent in their lot—who bear their position with fortitude, knowing that

some day retribution will come and old scores will be settled.

Dana Schmidt, of the U.P., and Al Steinkopf, of the A.P., and I, as well as a Mexican correspondent named Llergo, occupied our compartment. However, at the border a Czech asked if he might ride with us. We replied that he certainly could. His first action was to take out loose tobacco and cigarette-papers. Expertly he rolled a cigarette. There were no straggling bits of tobacco coming out of either end. It was tightly packed. It was an excellent job.

As he lit up I asked where he had learned to roll cigarettes in the Western style, and remarked that I had never seen anyone in Europe roll a cigarette before.

"Oh," he answered, "I learned how to do it from your American films!"

Czecho-Slovakia is more American than any other country in Europe. Created by the efforts of Woodrow Wilson, it reveres everything strictly 'United States' and copies wherever it can. The incident of the young man actually becoming proficient in rolling cigarettes *à la* Tom Mix with no other guide than Western films is a good example.

As the train rolled over the border every one stood in the corridor to admire the scenery. For an hour chalet, castle, and miniature mountain crag flowed past. Dana Schmidt remarked that a year ago he had been over the same countryside "with the German Army" as it marched into Czecho-Slovakia. He pointed out a bridge where he had seen several persons violently killed by what was termed an "unexpected explosion." The Sudetenland, for him, had few pleasant memories. But everything seemed peaceful enough, at least from the train.

"This is our Sudetenland," said a propaganda escort at my side. "It has always been German, and should never have been taken from the Reich. Our Führer will right everything, as he did here; and the Versailles Treaty . . ."

I turned away. It was the same old story, the repetition that is constantly poured into the ears of foreign correspondents at every opportunity. The Press chiefs of the German Government and the more clever of their assistants refrain from

attempting to influence American reporters, but the underlings seemed to be subject to a general order never to let a chance slip to boost the Third Reich.

Finally the country flattened out. We were past "Little Switzerland." I asked if the territory we were passing through was still inhabited by Sudeten Germans.

"This is Czech," answered a Nazi. "You can see it is inferior to Sudetenland. Observe the poorer farming, the condition of the land, the cheap clothes of the people, the lack of German efficiency," he went on. There was more along the same lines.

Though the picturesqueness of the mountains had disappeared, replaced by softly rolling farmlands, I could not agree with any of his statements. The farms looked prosperous, the people decently dressed, the landscape neatly European with the same compactness of small fields crowded upon each other and flanked by clean white homes and picture-book villages that one sees everywhere in Western Europe.

I believe the Nazi who claimed that Sudetenland was far superior in every way to the Czech countryside truly believed it was. His eyes grew warm as he talked. He was sincere—sincere to the point of seeing only as he had been trained to see. I did not answer. Long since I had learned that when such tirades begin it is futile to argue, to appeal to reason.

"Now look here, there's always two sides to things" simply does not exist in the Reich. That homely privilege is not for Germans, nor should foreigners indulge in differences of opinion—at least not during a war.

Late in the afternoon we arrived in Prague. As we walked down the long station platform I was surprised at the packed condition of a train on the opposite track. Every carriage seemed jammed with hundreds of labourers. They were not happy. No one was seeing them off. Women and children were not among them. Their clothes were not the type one sees on Czechs or Germans when they are about to take a trip. They were working clothes, overalls, blue dungarees. They had little luggage—a few wrapped bundles.

A Nazi official walking with us explained as he noticed our interest :

" Those are Czechs bound for the Reich. Most are simply going on holiday to see Germany, tour Germany, and learn more about National Socialism. A few are labourers and skilled workers who are needed in our factories. They are envied by other Czechs, for they have the chance to see beautiful Germany and begin to understand the enlightenment that all Germans enjoy ! "

Most of us looked sceptical, and the head of the party hastily changed the conversation. What was too obvious naturally should not be cloaked fantastically. Later I was told that the younger official had believed much of what he had said, but actually he had been completely wrong in stating that the Czechs were going on holiday. It was readily admitted that the train we had seen was filled with Czechs who were to stay in the Reich for a period of from one to two years. Here they would work in German factories, supplanting Nazi workers who either were transferred into other factories or were thereby released for the Army.

I inquired whether they were allowed to take their families with them, and was told that this was impossible at present as extra mouths to feed could not be tolerated. Later the families might join their husbands and fathers. Permission was given for the men to spend two weeks a year in their homes in the Protectorate. I was told that they adapted themselves rapidly to life in the Reich, that they soon adjusted themselves to National Socialism and love for the Führer. I was told that they welcomed the chance to work for the Reich, to leave their homes and families !

There was another reason for the exodus of tens of thousands of Czech workers. They were replaced by German farmers. The Protectorate must be Germanized. The old cry that Bohemia and Moravia were basically German re-echoed. Now that the lands had returned to the Reich they must eliminate foreign influence, become purely German. The influx of Nazi farmers offset the leaving of Czech workers. An exchange would gradually make Czecho-Slovakia wholly Teutonic.

It would also lessen the possibility of revolution ! This I heard from several Nazis with whom I talked on the subject. They were frank, begging my confidence in not repeating their opinions. Excellent Party members and loyal to their Führer, they spoke freely with the philosophy that what Adolf Hitler decreed was absolutely right, even just, but that sometimes trial by fire was a necessity.

The sight of Czechs pouring into the Reich, leaving families and homes, touched the German heart. The family is one of the strongest bonds inherent in the German people. Though they abhor the suffering that the newcomers find is their lot, Germans blindly realize that it is the will of the Leader, and refuse to allow a shadow of doubt to cross their minds as to his wisdom.

This was the attitude that was carefully repeated—iterated with the earnest request that I should understand that the German heart is big, but that the soul of National Socialism is beyond sentiment and personal feelings.

At the platform gates we were met by a delegation. Dozens of brown S.A. and black S.S. uniforms were in the crowd. Behind the Nazi Party and police uniforms were a hundred or so Prague National Socialists, both imported and 'Hitlerized.' A movie camera recorded our arrival, while brief speeches of welcome 'gutturaled' from under top-hats and military headgear.

The film was shown all over Germany as part of the current week's newsreel. The spoken commentary ran something like this :

" Foreign journalists tour the Protectorate, disproving the ridiculous Reuters assertion of revolution among the Czechs. The correspondents state that they saw no evident signs of discontent in Böhmen and Mähren. Again the English Ministry of Lies exhibits its true character and flaming desire as well as insidious faculty for complete untruth ! "

Papers over the length and breadth of Germany printed photos of various parts of our visit with a similar sentiment. It was a Ministry of Propaganda order. On other trips the foreign Pressmen in Berlin were used for propaganda purposes. What they wrote back to their papers was never

heard of nor read in Germany with a few exceptions, and these usually concerned those who were asked to leave the Reich because of some story they had written which displeased the Government. But no opportunity was lost to use foreign correspondents for local propaganda.

Despite the rigid control of wireless and newspapers, Dr Goebbels knows that news broadcasts are still listened to by Germans, and that certain seditious literature harmful to Hitler's Reich enters the country and is distributed. Therefore, whenever he could get foreign representatives and link up their presence with his own sub-titles under photo reprints, he did so. The trip to the Protectorate was a shining example of this. We even had an official movie cameraman with us throughout the entire length of our stay of four days. He made shots whenever we stood together as a group no matter what the occasion.

When we met President Hacha the cameraman made very elaborate preparations, even rehearsing a few hastily gathered extras, so that his films—and there must have been hundreds of feet of them—would appear not only authentic but full of the type of Nazi drama so often seen in the newsreels. No propaganda film appearing in the reels is allowed to lack every bit of showmanship possible in the circumstances.

After the ceremonies we piled into buses, and, splitting the party, we proceeded in the first bus to the Hotel Esplanade. My first impression of Prague was that of an American city set in an old European atmosphere, but which, while retaining the charm of age, imbues itself with the modernity of progress.

The streets were filled with hurrying throngs who paused now and then, as we do in America, to look in a shop window and then step briskly along again. I saw few Nazi uniforms, and Nazi Party buttons were almost totally absent, though a member of the escort section of our group assured every one that there were many new Party members in the Czech capital.

The street signs were in both German and Czech—the former always on top and brightly new. A recent edict from Berlin had demanded that all signs, names of villages, and

legal documents were to be printed in both languages throughout the Protectorate. In law courts testimony is now given in both tongues—German first.

Though the Reuter dispatch had claimed that many had been killed in the main streets of Prague and that the fighting had been extremely fierce, particularly round the statue and square of King Wenceslaus, we saw no evidence of trouble, past or present. No opportunity was lost by our Ministry of Propaganda guides to point out that no walls were scarred by machine-gun fire, nor were there holes in the streets from hand-grenades.

I was surprised to see the name of Wilson on squares, streets, and shops. In fact, English is seen everywhere on shop-fronts.

Steinkopf, who had been bureau chief in Prague for the Associated Press for a long period, promised that the first time we could get away he would show us some of the things in Prague that ordinarily we might not see. Then he told us about what the Czechs did on their last National Day and how until recently they had continued to do the same every dark night.

The King Wenceslaus statue stands at the head of the principal boulevard and shopping street in the city. Wenceslaus as one of the most beloved of ancient Bohemian kings is regarded as the patron saint of the Czechs, and of Prague. Every National Day wreaths were put on the base of the statue, and the populace wore buttons celebrating the occasion in their lapels. On the last date of the celebration Czechs in Prague wore black in their buttonholes, where previously the gay national badge or a flower had been. At midnight hundreds of wreaths tied with black crêpe were piled round Wenceslaus. The Nazis were furious in the morning, but, other than making a few arrests, did nothing drastic.

Thereafter at the first streak of dawn following every dark or rainy night S.S. patrol men found wreaths round the statue. Even though the square was well guarded the wreaths would still be there in the morning.

Finally heavy penalties were threatened. The day they



were made public loud talk was heard in bars and restaurants that the secret decorating of the shrine of Prague at night would cease. The loudest of the assurers were known to be ardent Czech nationalists and anything but Nazi sympathizers. The Gestapo and political powers governing the city were satisfied. That night there were only the ordinary Nazi guards round the square. Reinforcements that had been there until that time were withdrawn.

The next morning the statue was literally covered with wreaths !

More arrests were made, this time on a far larger scale. Though many families were sad in Prague, thousands of others laughed long and loud. Steinkopf claimed that since then it had become a kind of daring stunt for young Czechs to perpetrate on any dark night. Some, he said, were accomplished just previous to a betrothal or marriage as a kind of proof of manliness and bravery. Whether it had become a national custom *sub rosa* he did not know.

While I was in Prague the nights were clear, with one exception, and though I watched for an hour or so before dawn, and the mist and rain were thick, no wreaths were laid. Informants whom I cannot mention here assured me the next day that it had become too dangerous in the past few weeks, and that Czechs were advised by their older compatriots not to antagonize the conquerors, as others would suffer. The time, as I was told, was not ripe in the Protectorate for further demonstration.

Some weeks after we had returned from Prague the student riots broke out. These, friends in Berlin informed us, were entirely unpremeditated, and only hindered a final, desperate effort when the time came. They were plotted by disgruntled and patriotic students in the University of Prague. This time Nazi methods were not gentle. Dozens were killed in the fighting, and dormitories were blockaded, while machine-guns were trained on the doorways and windows of the buildings.

After several hours of struggle, during which Yugoslav students joined their Czech friends, the dormitories were stormed and taken. Immediately a wave of arrests swept

through the capital. Students and young men—even children—who had had nothing to do with the riots were incarcerated to await Nazi examination. The S.S. handled the situation with its usual thoroughness and brutality. While culprits, guilty and otherwise, waited for trial they were beaten unmercifully, and many died, either during the beating or shortly afterwards from its effect.

One journalist, who managed to wangle permission to visit the Protectorate some weeks afterwards, reported a terrible story. It did not reach the pages of his paper because the reporter desired to remain within the Reich and continue to serve his editors and public at home.

The eleven-year-old son of a college professor was arrested. He was placed with a hundred or so other children of his own age in a cellar. Systematically they were beaten with rubber truncheons and hose-pipe every hour until most of them could not stand. A number died. The boy was kept the whole night, and then released to stagger home. His father asked him to write of his experiences, stating them just as they had happened.

In simplest language devoid of horrifying adjectives the lad wrote his story. This document I saw. Its genuineness could not be doubted. Misspelled here and there, still with the amazing directness of childish truth, the professor's son told of the dark cellar, of the visits of the S.S. men with their instruments of torture, of the repeated threats that they would be killed unless they revealed which of their parents' friends were plotting against the Nazi régime in the Protectorate. The professor turned the story over to my friend, who some day will publish what happened to one innocent caught in the net of Nazi suspicion and subjected to typical National Socialistic police methods.

To the outside world the Nazis apparently made a generous gesture, or so they wished it to appear. Though hundreds of Czech young men had been arrested, only a few were to be sent to Dachau, a near-by concentration camp, or into the newly founded camps for political prisoners in German Poland. This, however, was offset by regulations calculated to eliminate any further revolt.

More thousands were sent under arrest to the police-stations and gaols. They were released after a few hours, or a day at the most. These were told that they were responsible for families within their immediate neighbourhood. If any person or relative, regardless of where he might be, was active against the German "protection" the man called before the police would be held directly responsible and punished by death.

The student riots were merely an excuse. Previously the Germans had imposed harsh Nazi-ism upon the Czechs, but never before upon such a scale. Tens of thousands faced police chiefs and Gestapo everywhere in the Protectorate. The same terror of neighbour and family was instigated which works so effectively in Germany proper. Now came a real reign of iron over the freedom-loving Czechs. Even their parents, sons, and daughters fell under the shadow of mistrust. Yet the hope of revolt is not dead in Czecho-Slovakia. I believe that when the time is ripe, despite the rigorous Nazi repression, the Czechs will rise *en masse*.

In Berlin, when the student trouble was reported, telephone lines to the Protectorate were closed. Vague, terrible stories trickled through. The only certain information came from a Dutchman serving an American paper in Prague. He spoke guardedly just before the lines were shut. His status even then, before the invasion of Holland, was precarious. Admission to the Protectorate was refused. The Ministry of Propaganda was evasive. We could only guess, and write our dispatches from Berlin, hinting and suggesting what we felt was the situation. When the truth came out, weeks later, and details were available, other news events crowded the world Press. The whole true story of the student riots in January of 1940 will never be known—unless some day the files of the Gestapo and the S.S. are exposed to the world.

Settled in the hotel, Steinkopf, Schmidt, and I went shopping. I was completely out of shirts, having lived in my week-end bag, which was all I originally had brought from England. This seemed a golden opportunity to recoup my sadly depleted wardrobe. German laundries are not gentle!

While we waited for Dana Steinkopf talked with several persons he knew in the hotel. When Dana arrived Al said he had heard some interesting things ; after we had visited a shop or two he would tell us over an *apéritif*.

I got my shirts, socks, and other linen. The haberdashery was well stocked. No *Bezugsscheine* were needed, and one could buy as much as one wished. It was a great relief not to have to rush round to bureaux and sign one's life away to buy clothes, as every one had to do in Berlin.

The proprietor, however, was worried. That very day soap had been rationed, and he was sure that before long every commodity would come into that category.

To protect the Czechs from a sudden rush of German tourists who, short of everything and wishing to lay in a stock for the duration of the war, would descend upon the Protectorate, buying with reichsmarks, which then were two Czech kronen to the mark, the Nazis had forbidden tourist trade and were very particular about who entered Czechoslovakia.

When the Germans had marched into the former democracy the kronen was set in relation to the mark on the basis mentioned. Later it dropped even lower in proportion. Food, when I was in the Protectorate, was plentiful. Shortly afterwards it became scarce, as did clothes and everything else necessary for living. The Nazis dropped their trade barrier, which was in effect until February 1940. Tourists poured into Prague, and the Czechs soon found themselves as desperately poor as the ordinary German who sacrifices all for the Führer.

The fear of the haberdashery proprietor was far from unfounded. Though he sold me what I wanted, he was not too anxious for large sales. With the kronen the sole property of German Government bankers, he felt it was a matter of time before his stock would be gone and the proceeds halved and quartered.

Next Al took us to a hardware shop to buy torches. In Berlin it was impossible to get either torches or batteries for use during the blackout darkness of the night. Near by was a store which specialized in this type of equipment. Because

Prague at that time was blacked out only from eleven at night until morning, it was still possible to buy pocket torches.

The assistant sold us all several lights, with plenty of extra batteries for each. These were prizes indeed. In fact, the torches had been specially made and emitted a dim glow through a dark blue lens. As one could not use an ordinary torch with its bright white colour, an off shade was ideal. We all invested the equivalent of several American dollars in lamps and batteries. The refills were fitted only to the new type of blackout torch, and could not be used for other makes.

When we all got back to Berlin we found out that during our absence a new regulation had been put into effect.

Only police were allowed to carry torches with blue lenses or blue paper inside. All civilians must either dull the rays of their torches with red paper or screen the beam so that it only lit the ground immediately under their feet. Anyone other than a policeman who was caught using a blue torch would be severely fined ! So our purchases, which we prized more than anything else, were useless.

However, it was fortunate that I had been able to buy shirts. Later, when I again ran out I had to purchase some German makes. They were *ersatz* and lasted exactly two washings ! Besides this, they cost four times the normal price. The assistant in a Berlin shop sadly told me that they were made out of wood !

In a comfortable lounge bar, as American as the Biltmore in New York, Al told us what he had heard in the hotel from old friends.

Prague was desperate. Every one felt it would be impossible to bear up much longer. The wiser counselled that the only sensible way was to wait. The Army had been dispersed. There were still supplies of rifles and petrol hidden. But those who knew their whereabouts were silent. Reuters had been wrong. There had been no open outbreak beyond minor incidents in Brünn and Pilsen, where the famous Skoda works are. However, feeling was running high, and leading Czechs feared that the people were fast getting beyond the dictates of common sense.

It was a sad capital. Life ran on, seemingly tranquil ; but

the stir of resentment was mounting, and the only answer would be bloody death from one end of the land to the other if Czechs rose.

The calmer citizens pleaded for time, while the hotheaded youth clamoured for action. The heel of the oppressor grew heavier daily. A great underground grumbling swept through Prague. The transferring of workers to the Reich—literally kidnapping—was exciting the working classes to fever pitch. The crushing of free speech in the universities, and the substitution of Nazi Kultur and teaching, inflamed the students.

The expected opening of the frontier made inevitable the total disintegration of free trade. Food-supplies were endangered with a hungry Reich just across the border. The people were frightened—frightened to the point of doing something about it. And this was the main fear of intelligent Czechs, for now revolt or demonstrations meant the brutality of the S.S. on a big scale.

Already fresh regiments of *Schutzstaffel*, just back from Poland, had been quartered on the people in Bohemia and Moravia. Trouble seemed imminent—trouble at an inopportune time.

The student uprising which followed later proved these fears, and what happened after the diminutive revolution was just what the Nazis were waiting for—a good excuse ! An excuse to apply the methods which insured the Reich, at least for the present, security from organized resistance in the Protectorate.

While Al told us these things people came up to speak to him. He asked all of them how things were. Without exception they shook their heads, after first carefully looking round, and replied that the outlook was bad—as dark as it had been since German troops marched into Czecho-Slovakia. Their comments were similar—so similar that I wondered. When I asked Al he said that it was no secret that the Czechs were more united than was generally recognized.

I heard more of this later at Lany, at President Hacha's reception for the foreign Press.

We returned to the hotel. The buses were waiting. We were to be taken to the Burg—famous old citadel of Czech

independence and the Bohemian kings. Here the Nazi leaders of the Protectorate would speak to us, would welcome us to Germany's Böhmen and Mähren—"returned to the Reich," as it was put by another of the officious Ministry of Propaganda escorts!

Across the Vltava river and up the hill to the Burg was a delightful ride. Everywhere I saw evidence of Czech thriftiness and business methods. Apart from the hoary character of most of the buildings, American culture and business acumen fairly shone from the trim, neat shops, and the modern advertising they displayed. Windows were as smartly dressed as any in Fifth Avenue.

The odd-helmeted Czech police were everywhere nodding to acquaintances, swinging their clubs casually. One point I noticed, and asked about it. The police carried no firearms. When I inquired I was coolly informed that they had been deprived of their revolvers ever since the Germans had assumed control of the country.

At the entrance to the Burg I saw something that I had seen in Poland. The guards posted in front of the main doorway had bayonets attached to their rifles. The only other place where I had seen bayonets fixed on the rifles of guards was at the Westerplatte, where *Arbeitsdienst* soldiers guarded Polish prisoners.

The usual procedure when guard is mounted, according to German infantry drill regulations, is that the bayonets must remain in their scabbards. Immediately we got the impression that Prague was under some sort of martial law. We were told that it is not the usual custom for the sentries at the Burg to carry bayoneted guns.

I mentioned the fact of the bayoneted guns in a broadcast that night, and was allowed to make the comparison between the Westerplatte guards and those surrounding the Burg. When the script was checked censors made no remark about my observation.

It was the first sign that there either had been or would be trouble in the Protectorate. The Nazis are meticulous in their observance of what is correct. This is true in the Army particularly. When sentries carry fixed bayonets a state of

emergency must either be the case—or have been. Perhaps Reuters had not been so wrong after all !

Questioning directly, I received no answer. Nazis with us announced that it was no business of theirs what the commandant chose to order. But they seemed slightly uneasy at my query.

Inside the Burg we were shown through a series of ancient hallways and stairs to the ante-room of the Nazi commandant of Prague. A sort of informal Press conference began.

Though a number of leading questions were asked concerning rumours of revolution, they were all carefully evaded—except for the statement that we were allowed to see for ourselves and that the Reuter report was, in nearly the same phrasing as Boemer had sent us off with, utterly ridiculous.

Our questions hurriedly disposed of, the commandant made the usual stiff Prussian speech expected on these occasions and retired. The rest of the meeting was taken up with English, French, and Spanish translations of the speech. It was formal and said nothing, other than empty words of welcome painstakingly written and overburdened with unnecessary rococo sentences.

We were driven back to the hotel through lighted streets. It was a great relief to be away from the gloom of the blackout. Brilliant lights advertising gum, cigarettes, and food products sparkled overhead. Shops glowed warmly with window-lighting, and street-lamps burned brightly.

We enjoyed it as thoroughly as though we were emerging from the terrors of semi-blindness into a world of normal reality. It may sound strange to say that one was exhilarated by the mere sight of ordinary lights after dark, but months of nightly pall are depressing. Sudden reappearance of the signal signs of civilization after the sun has set tossed the horrors of the blackout temporarily over our shoulders.

At the hotel we sat down to a delicious dinner. Prager ham, plenty of rich, succulent vegetables, and dessert that was anything but *ersatz* was served.

I liked Prague very much. I still do. That it must rest, trembling, under the iron hobnails of Hitlerism is to me one of the tragedies of nations that will not be forgotten in history.



Before I had been in Czecho-Slovakia I had the same idea as most Americans—that the Czechs were very distant, a strange people and wholly foreign.

Every one felt sorry for them when the Germans marched in, but the true nature and character of the people themselves was pretty much of an enigma. I have said that there is no city in Europe as completely American as Prague, nor any nation so ideologically dependent upon American customs and ways of thinking.

The Czechs are humanly American. They think much as we do, revere the same things we do, and mourn their independence as we should if we lost it. The whole atmosphere is poignant, brave, and honestly sincere. The people actually look to America much as the Negroes look upon Lincoln to-day, as their liberator, the guarantor of their right to a quiet respect and pride in themselves. To have all this wrested away has left an ache in every Czech's heart.

They do not say that they have been betrayed. Rather their attitude is fatalistic, but burningly hopeful that right will eventually prevail. And they are ready to help themselves when they feel that the time has come again to declare their inheritance of freedom as a people and as a separate nation.

There are a number of popular night clubs in Prague. They closely resemble those of Fifty-second Street in New York. The music is the best I heard in Europe. The atmosphere is friendly, gay. Perhaps the only signal difference is that the charge is never extortionate, and the waiters are always satisfied with what one leaves as a tip.

Al suggested that we should see a few of the more interesting dancing places. He promised that I should be surprised at their modernness, *cuisine*, and gaiety.

The first stop was the Hotel Esplanade. The crowd was a happy one. Couples sat about sipping drinks. They danced to excellent music, which, though most of the pieces were far from new, was peppy and played in typical American style.

At one end of the room was a bar. Here several attractive girls sat. I noticed that they refused to dance, although they were repeatedly asked by newcomers. Instead of accepting,

they mumbled an explanation, hinting that they would prefer a drink and conversation. We asked a waiter why they were not dancing. He said that the girls were hostesses and that those at the bar were German. When the war began Hitler had decreed through his representative in the Protectorate that German girls should not dance. The decree was to be revoked at midnight.

We went to the bar and talked with several of the girls. They greeted us with "*Heil Hitler!*"—to which we replied "*Grüss Gott!*" They asked if we were Czech. When we answered that we were Americans they were interested. Asking question after question, they demanded to know what we thought of Hitler, how America really regarded National Socialism, and what the latest news was from Berlin. Their knowledge of current affairs in the Reich amazed us. Outwardly, in their smart evening gowns and with careful coiffures, they looked like anything but people who would be interested in world affairs or politics.

I asked how they happened to know so much about what was going on in the Reich. Actually they had brought Al and me up to date on one or two things that were unknown to us when we left Berlin—despite Press conferences and our sources of information. They answered that they attended National Socialistic meetings every day—Party forums where they heard the latest news.

They said it was imperative that colonizers of all types in the Protectorate must keep abreast of what happened in the Fatherland. They were good Nazis and had their uses.

Many a Czech with too much wine in him had fallen for their charm, and divulged something he should have kept to himself. The hostesses were among the very few German girls who were allowed to wear rouge and powder in public. Czech friends assured us that all the girls were registered with and paid by the Gestapo. The hotel was forced to keep them in its employ.

We joined Llergo, the Mexican correspondent, at a table near by. He was with a young lady who continuously chortled at his attempts to speak German. She was a Czech, and knew

only the rudiments of the language. Al translated for all, partly in German, partly in English and Czech. Pointedly I asked what the Czech hostesses—the nationality of the girls working in the supper room was about half and half—thought of their German counterparts.

She replied softly that they were cordially disliked by herself and her countrywomen—not for themselves, but for what they stood. Her mouth covered by a glass, she said that the Germans were polite and pleasant most of the time, but always turned the conversation to National Socialism and Hitler. Czech friends had been warned to stay away from the Nazi hostesses. Few patriots ever sat and talked with them. It was dangerous. A young man had been foolhardy the night before his marriage. He had been out with bachelor friends, who had managed to get him into a merry condition. They had come to the Esplanade. The boy had talked with one of the hostesses at the bar. Slyly he had told her that, as an act of bravery to please his future wife, he was going to lay a wreath at Wenceslaus' feet that night.

The marriage never took place. He was arrested soon after he left the hotel and disappeared, presumably into a concentration camp. His bride-to-be was heartsick, and for several days was in bed from the shock.

When I asked her to point out which German girl had been responsible she said it didn't matter—that anyone of them would have done the same. Faces and individuals are nothing to National Socialism. The Czechs realize that.

"Aren't you afraid to talk like this to us?" I asked.

"Why? We Czechs are not cowards! We talk—say what we like—but you are right. One should be careful! It is hard to stop saying what one thinks after twenty years of free speech. We Czechs are learning—slowly!"

Tears were in her eyes. Sadly she told us that her brother was, she believed, in the Dachau concentration camp. He did not come home one night. Friends told the family that he had said too much in a coffeehouse. The usual Gestapo ears had heard him.

At midnight the Esplanade supper room filled with Storm Troop uniforms, young men who swept the girls into their

arms and danced wildly. It was their first dance since the war had started. A few Czechs remained on the floor; but most slipped back into an adjoining cocktail lounge, where they watched the Germans enjoy themselves.

We left. Now the streets were blacked out. A block away was another club. It too was filled with the same smart gaiety as the Esplanade.

Here Al met a Czech newspaperman, a close friend. We sat in a corner, he whispering to us guardedly. Arrests lately had doubled and trebled. The Nazis were making secret drives against Czech patriots. He believed that over eight thousand persons had been thrown into concentration camps in the last two months. Reuters had been wrong, yet revolt had come within a hair's breadth of covering Prague streets with blood.

Pilsen, where the great Skoda works are, and Brünn—both cities that the British news report stated had seen street fighting—had had similar narrow escapes. He hoped there would be no more trouble, that the arrests would stop. The time would come to strike. It was not here yet.

The same phrase I heard from a dozen Czechs. They feared the peril of rising too soon, when events were not right in the rest of Europe to assure success. If that happened Czechs would be stripped of what little power they still possessed.

We were going to Lany in the morning to meet President Hacha. Our friend advised the name of a certain person in attendance on the aged President. He would have much to tell. We promised to get him alone if possible. All that was necessary was to mention the Czech journalist's name. He believed it was vital to the future of Czecho-Slovakia that America should know some of the facts of the German rule and Czech plans.

Suddenly he stopped and stood up. Abruptly he said good-bye in a loud voice. With his eyes towards us, he indicated that some one had come into the place. It was better that he should leave. We never saw him again, and later I heard that he too had disappeared.

The night following, back in Prague, I filed as much of the

story as I dared. I told of the arrests and of the general atmosphere. Before I had finished Miss Schultz, who received the call, demanded in horror that I should be careful—not to state things as I had. I desisted, but the bitter, tragic taste in my mouth and the ache in my heart for the Czechs had overridden caution. The experience at Lany had been so poignantly terrible, so full of pathos, that it was impossible to file anything but the truth !

Most of the story I wrote back in Berlin. It never went out of the country. The unadulterated facts were so damning that it would have been most unwise for the *Tribune* Bureau to have been responsible. After all, the paper maintained its representatives in Germany to send news. If such a story, even though perfectly true, were printed the *Tribune* might find itself without correspondents in Naziland.

The story finally burned in the big ash-tray on my desk—where so many other typewritten sheets eventually found their way to ashes.

The next morning we piled into buses and started for Lany. President Hacha, I was informed, was practically a prisoner on a large estate in the town. It is about thirty miles from Prague in wild mountain country. The town itself has, perhaps, a thousand inhabitants, and has no rail connexion with the Czech capital. Yet here, in insignificant Lany, is the seat of the Czech Government—far enough away and cut off from everything to do little harm.

I am certain the pretext of Government is only maintained for the eyes of the world—so that Nazis may say that they allow the Czechs to retain their own form of government, and even permit the existence of a President.

The trip to Lany was fascinating. We wound over mountain roads that cut and swung as abruptly as the proverbial hairpin. Little villages curled snugly round the bends in the serpentine road, climbing up to tiny chalets nestled against the steepness of the mountain-side.

The people were mostly in peasant dress, though the sight of a Storm Troop uniform was not unusual—witness to the fact that not even the smallest of communities was without its Nazi ‘guidance.’

On the way we got lost. The buses bumped and rattled over a lonely road. Out came maps. Our guides swore briefly at the drivers. We lost track of the other bus behind us. Finally, after half an hour's futile turnings, we stopped to ask the way of a rugged peasant and his wife who trudged along the road.

Before replying the man looked us over thoroughly. Then he gestured a direction. He knew no German. His wife stared at us with hate in her eyes. The Nazi uniforms branded us as interlopers in their minds. This was remote country where the Protectorate was still called Czecho-Slovakia, where most of the trouble of Nazi adjustment had occurred.

Following the man's directions, we soon found ourselves at a dead end surrounded by deep forest and jutting, rocky hill-sides. We laughed at the cursing which snapped about the driver's ears.

Another half-hour of wandering over the countryside and a correct direction from a woman who spoke German brought us to Lany. The other bus had not arrived.

As we drove into the estate in which the Government was housed, two Czech soldiers stood smartly to attention at the gate. They were the only national troops I saw on the whole trip. An officer sat in a sentry-box at the side. He switched his riding-crop against shiny leather and looked the other way as we rolled through the gate.

The drive wound through neatly trimmed hedges and looming shady trees to the entrance of the mansion. The estate had been built by an eccentric German baron who had wished to get away from court life and the whirl of politics. It had been beautifully selected for such a purpose. Although only thirty miles from Prague, the estate might have been deep in Tibet from the loneliness that surrounded it.

Here President Hacha was kept, a virtual prisoner, and here the skeleton of freedom rattled its bones !

We were received by several young Czechs, all perfectly dressed except for an occasional frayed shirt-cuff or worn collar. They were correct in their greetings, stiffly formal, yet friendly. President Hacha would not see us until the other bus arrived. We might walk through the gardens at the back of the mansion.

"The Czech Government was proud to welcome the world Press."

It was piteous—and doubly so when the hall filled up with half a dozen strapping S.S. men whose swaggering dwarfed the smaller-statured Government clerks. The Czechs paid little attention to them, according them their wishes, remaining polite, but certainly not departing from their quiet dignity.

The gardens were beautiful. We walked along a path through beech woods. A group of strollers approached us. They were Czechs—several men and two women. They nodded graciously as we passed. One in our party understood Czech. He said they were talking of music. Then he went on to point out that Czechs revere learning and scholars above everything else. Perhaps there is an exception to that statement. No nation has ever loved its freedom more. Few nations have so capably managed government by the people for the people !

The group that had passed us might have come out of a quiet painting, a Corot landscape with men and women in the foreground standing or walking peacefully—full of the joy of gentle living.

One notices little things. There was nothing striking in the fact that we passed Czechs strolling in the gardens of the Presidential estate in Lány. Yet there I felt I had seen the soul of the Czech—a soul rich in learning and happy in the pursuit of the better things in life.

I could not help making the comparison between the strollers and noisy Storm Troopers, State-inspired art and opera, gigantic Party rallies, and the rest of the stage paraphernalia of Nazism.

Back at the mansion, we found that the other bus had arrived. The identical procedure took place as had greeted us. The Party photographer went through his elaborate routine. The Czech under-secretaries and clerks shook hands and quietly bade every one welcome.

We went upstairs to a reception hall. President Hacha appeared ; spoke briefly, saying that he was glad we had come and hoped that we would enjoy our stay in the Protectorate ;

and stated flatly that, to his knowledge, there had been no such disturbance as the Reuter dispatch claimed.

Then he went further. To our surprise he said he hoped that one day soon Czecho-Slovakia would regain its rightful place among the nations of the world.

As he was flanked left and right by Storm Troopers—and he a bare five feet two—his statements seemed to us almost foolhardy. Hacha, perhaps, is the most pitiful victim of the Nazi invasion. He is a broken man. His heart is weak. It is asserted that he has to take frequent stimulants, and that he seldom receives anyone because of his physical condition. He shook hands with each of us, making some remark to all. When I met him he said courteously that he believed the *Chicago Tribune* was a true friend of Czecho-Slovakia. He had read with interest our reports of the fateful history of his land in the past year. He believed that the paper was in full sympathy with the Czech nation.

The S.S. men, who never left his side—veritable guards—frowned. Several of us said afterwards that there surely must have been an accounting for such rash statements. We never heard. To the aged President it was a chance worth taking. The American representatives of two world-famous news agencies and a powerful newspaper were present. Guards or not, he must say as much as he dared. All of us admired his courage. A concentration camp for him would mean death in a short time.

Broken in health, a prisoner, and his every action seen by the S.S. and Gestapo, he still refused to adhere to their wishes when he thought word might go across the seas to America, the founder and inspiration of his country.

We were told the President would answer any queries the Press might have.

Questions were asked. Whenever a cogent interrogation was put to the President—one that might embarrass the German Protectorate—it was answered by a Storm Troop officer or one of our Ministry of Propaganda guides. It was one of the most humiliating scenes I have ever witnessed. As Hacha opened his mouth to reply a booted, be-medalled S.S. major would step forward, interrupting before the President



could give an answer. The impromptu Press conference came to an abrupt end. When correspondents saw that no answers would be given in the conference except those wholly favourable to Germans and coloured to suit the uses of National Socialism they desisted. No further questions were asked.

We went into another room. Here tables were laden with tea-urns, rum, and sandwiches. A very correct butler served and supervised. Although he was Czech and had been in the service of Presidents for fifteen years, he still was the perfect counterpart of a Hollywood butler, who lorded it over the English country mansion in which he held full sway.

Protruding stomach, chin aimed at the sky, and keys clanking about his neck completed the illusion. He was the only faint glimpse of humour any of us saw or felt at Lany.

Tacitly we sought out the nobleman our Czech friend had spoken of in Prague. I should like to write his name, and perhaps some day I will. What he told us and his lack of fear when literally in the lion's den impressed me. Such men belong in the category of true heroes. I will call him the Baron.

In a corner we introduced ourselves. He is young, personable, straightforward, and passionately devoted to the revival of Czech freedom. He spoke freely, sometimes in such tones that I was afraid one of the many S.S. men in the room would stroll over and hear too much !

He was more than glad to talk with us. He hoped we should tell America about what was happening in Czecho-Slovakia, what the plans of loyal Czechs were, how the nation was far from resigned to German conquest.

"An example," he began, "of how much we love our German 'deliverers' is the incident which occurred in—well, let us say, village X. A Nazi post of several hundred troops had been quartered there since the Germans marched in. Every week on a certain day the soldiers would do their washing. It was hung beside the barracks. The barracks stood alongside a small lake. Though the Germans there were infantrymen, they had a few light tanks.

"Suddenly, without warning, a column formed and marched hurriedly out of the village. It was washing-day.

Their departure was so hurried that they had not stopped to take the clothes drying on the lines with them. Every man had left the barracks, pouring out of the town in double time.

"The town had many grievances against the men quartered there. Unfair demands had been made upon the populace. They believed now that something had happened, that the Nazis were gone for good—gone in such a hurry that it might mean the delivery of Czecho-Slovakia ! The village was off the beaten path. News was always several days late.

"The town fathers met. Why had the hated invaders marched out of town leaving everything behind them ? Not only the washing was left, but the tanks still stood in the makeshift armoury ! Like wildfire the news spread. The countryside swarmed into the town. For a while nothing was done, and then a great crowd gathered.

"Shouting and hugging one another for joy, all the townspeople and those who had joined them rushed to the barracks. Not even a sentry had been left. Gleefully the happy group saw the clothes-lines.

"Every one had convinced himself that somehow the Allies had achieved a great victory, that Czecho-Slovakia would soon be delivered, that the Germans were gone for ever !

"The German washing still dangled in the wind, but not for long ! Soon it had all sunk to the bottom of the lake amid happy cries of ' Long live Czecho-Slovakia ! ' "

The Baron paused a moment. From our corner we saw nearly all the correspondents standing in little groups, always with an S.S. man included. The Balkan newspapermen fairly fawned upon the uniformed Nazis. No one moved towards us. The Baron continued.

"Then one of the villagers got an idea. Soon it became general. The town would rid itself of the last vestige of Nazi domination. The tanks should follow the washing into the lake !

"Pushing and struggling, the townspeople took two of the light tanks to the water's edge and then finally, with willing hands, completely submerged them. As the third tank reached the lake a boy ran to the Bürgermeister. His voice full of alarm ; he cried that the Germans were returning.

"The crowd disappeared, as if by magic. The hurried leaving of the troops had been only a practice march—an exercise in evacuating their quarters quickly.

"The Nazi commandant was furious. The village was fined twenty-five thousand kronen, plus the cost of the ruined tanks and clothing.

"The people were delighted despite their disappointment at the return of the troops. It had been well worth it!"

Again the Baron paused. With a sadder expression he finished the story.

"When the Nazis heard the village felt that it had been money well invested, even though the fine and expense of the action was excessive, other steps were taken.

"The village Bürgermeister and a number of other important men in the community were executed. A fair percentage of the able-bodied workers were sent off to a concentration camp. No longer was the incident a joke on the Nazis!

"As you know," he concluded, the "Nazis lack any sense of humour whatsoever. To play a joke upon them is as bad as slapping their faces! They do not understand. The fine was enough, more than enough! It impoverished the village completely! But blood had to be drawn to appease Nazi sensitivity!"

I asked him whether the Czechs were doing anything towards national unity should the time come for a revolution. He replied that the Germans had done a very thorough job in making such efforts extremely difficult.

"You see," he explained, "it is against the law for more than fifty people to meet together. The newspapers are all strictly Nazi-controlled. No news, or even Government regulations passed here with the sanction of the Nazis, can be published. There is no way for laws enacted by the so-called Czech Government to be brought to the attention of the people. As you can easily ascertain, the whole arrangement is nothing more than a farce.

"However, Czechs are far from inactive. Beer parties are encouraged—the German *Verein* idea of gathering for songs and merrymaking. It is here that we tell our fellow-citizens

what we are doing at Lany, what new Government actions have been decreed by the President and his council. It is here that silent votes are taken, where bills are still passed or rejected by the people."

Al, Dana, and I looked incredulous.

"Oh, I know," he hastened to add. "It is not a very efficient system, but it retains the spark of hope that it is our duty to keep alive in the people. Whether the bills pass or not is unimportant. That the people know that there are Czechs who are interested—that they still retain a hand in their Government—is the thing of vital importance."

"Then," I asked, "is this as far as you go? I have heard stories in Berlin of much more."

He hesitated, then went on.

"You heard correctly. The beer parties have other functions. A great deal has been written and hazarded about what happened to much of the Czech Army's material when the Germans entered the country. Each meeting of fifty Czechs receives instructions. The men know where certain munitions, rifles, and machine-guns are hidden. Other war supplies, in great numbers, were not turned over to the Nazis.

"When the time is ripe . . ."

Again the old phrase we had so often heard since coming into the Protectorate !

"But have you sufficient organization and arms to make an effective resistance, to promise a fair measure of success, if you tried?" I asked.

"Frankly, at this time no!" he replied. "It is not easy to band together men and evolve plans when only fifty at a time can be reached—and these seen only once a month! Besides this, the Nazis are fast sending those they consider dangerous into Germany to work for the Reich.

"But," he said, "we are making progress. Our greatest fear is that a few hotheads may rise before the proper time. Then all our labour will have to be begun again."

The butler refilled our teacups with rum and tea, passed the cakes, and beckoned to a lackey to bring cigarettes.

"I believe it is better," said the Baron, "to meet, perhaps, later in Prague, if you will?"

He gave us his card and telephone number. Before I left for Berlin we had another conversation. It revealed more of the plans of the loyal Czechs, what they eventually hoped to gain should the time at last prove itself ripe !

I cannot record it here. Too many persons and places would be endangered.

## CHAPTER VII

### "WHEN THE TIME IS RIPE . . ."

*T*HE trip back to Prague was uneventful. We had new drivers who knew the way. Our bus was unusually quiet. Even Llergo, the ever-laughing Mexican, had little to say. Lany, and its atmosphere of dignified bravery, had thrown a pall over our party. That night no one did much. Our Nazi guides tried to cheer us up—suggested places to go to, things to see in Prague. Few were interested. We went to bed early. In the morning we were to go to Pilsen and Brünn. It was a long trip. We begged that sleep was what we needed most.

I got little. The spectacle of a people and Government crushed and bleeding was far too new to me.

I had seen the horror of Poland ; but somehow that, in the process of becoming fitted to the uses of Nazism, was not as terrible as the hopelessness of Czecho-Slovakia, living on the dreams of the future, its scant twenty years of freedom smashed overnight by a few minutes' talk at Munich.

I have had many wild rides in cars. Sometimes it was a matter of getting somewhere quickly when the time factor was vital ; at other times I was merely in the hands of drivers who disregarded the natural rights of persons with them. Mexicans, French, and Italians, as well as Americans, have all put me through my paces as I gripped the door and tried vainly to put my foot through the floor !

But never again do I wish to ride with Sudeten Germans hurtling their cars through Czech countryside and villages !

As though their inimical feelings towards Czechs were not enough, the chauffeurs we had that day were not even good drivers. Besides, they sat behind the wheels of powerful, speedy motors.

The cars, Mercédès-Benzes, had been ordered in August—and paid for—by the Polish General Staff. They were never

delivered, and now were at the disposal of the Protectorate's Propaganda Department.

The drivers were Sudeten Germans who, though they never seemed able to give exact times, places, or details, harped continuously on the horrible atrocities they and their families had undergone when the Czechs controlled Sudetenland.

When they were given *carte blanche* to drive from Prague all the way to Brünn—pure Czech country—they welcomed their job with glee. They were S.S. men.

Dana Schmidt and I thought it wise to go with the party travelling in the cars. Al Steinkopf and Llergo, along with others, chose to travel by bus, going to another village in the other direction. Their itinerary was not as interesting, but the mode of travel was infinitely safer! Al had warned us that he didn't relish high-powered cars with Nazi chauffeurs. Dana and I laughed. The comfort of a good car, well upholstered and faster, sounded much more attractive than a bus. A Hungarian correspondent, the driver, and I piled into a second car. It was a shining black touring model geared up for high speeds. This the driver told us with pride. He raced the motor madly to prove his statement. I began to have vague fears. The two other cars filled, we started.

From the hotel to the outskirts of Prague was an experience in itself! We stopped for no traffic lights, maintained a speed of forty miles an hour round street corners and past slower cars. Our raucous horn blew continuously. Czech policemen looked on as we swept past. Though I hardly saw their faces, disgust and amazement at our recklessness were written all all over them. They dared not stop us. Ours was an official errand, and Party flags flew on the front bumpers.

Out of the suburbs, our drivers opened up with bursts of speed that fairly took our breath away. They zoomed over the brows of hills as if afraid that slowing down as they came to them was criminal. No curve could be manipulated without a maximum of screeching skids, and more than once the car turned half-way round—slammed into a jerking halt by the madman at the wheel.

As we were sitting in the tonneau with the top down every

bump threatened to throw us out of the car. White-faced and tense, I winced as each new bend in the road appeared just ahead.

"Don't you like this speed?" asked the Nazi guide.

Sharply I replied, "Hell, no!"

"I enjoy it," he remarked. "It reminds me of what we are doing in Germany; it is typical of the new order of things—exhilarating!"

I certainly was in no mood either to argue or to cogitate on the irony of his statements. When we begged him to ask the driver to slow down he answered that that was impossible as we had so very far to go and so much to do before we returned to Prague in the evening.

We began to go through villages, and that was worse. Though the streets were winding and narrow, our chauffeurs still maintained a breakneck speed. Necessarily they had to slow down from the seventy miles an hour on the road to fifty, or so, in the towns. But thirty miles an hour through crowded streets, market-places, and stray cows, geese, and horses is far from comfortable.

The horns blasted steadily from one end of a town to its outskirts on the other side. Absolutely no regard was paid to pedestrians.

Never before had I had such a burning hatred for Nazism. The total lack of consideration that the drivers displayed for anyone or anything—beautifully countenanced by our guides—sickened me. The S.S. men had no regard for those given into their care, either in the car or out of it.

Then came the peak of careless, foolish driving. Between towns the drivers began to play games on the road—at seventy miles an hour!

They began passing each other; and as the front wheel of one car came abreast of the rear bumper of another the passer would swerve in such a manner as to cause the other to swing off the road on to the shoulder. The resulting skid terrified us all—with the exception of our guide. He thought it was great sport!

Dana and I were angry. He is slow of temper and of an unusually even disposition, but this latest exhibition of wild



driving was too much. Almost simultaneously we yelled, "For God's sake, cut it out!"

Both of us were on the edge of the seat, had just regained breath from the last vicious skid. In shouting we leaned farther forward. I fell off the seat, and this, combined with the sudden pick-up of the car (indicating that our driver was bent on a similar revenge for our lurch off the road), evoked cursing that surprised me. Years before I had gone to sea as a forecastle sailor. I had not lost the art of lurid ejaculation. Every choice, biting phrase came back in a flood.

Luckily I spoke in English. The driver, I'm sure, had few more thorough cursings delivered to him in his life. Our guide, understanding perfectly, was far from pleased.

"That wasn't necessary," he insisted. "The boys meant no harm. However, as you are guests, I will ask him to stop playing 'car tag.'"

My anger rose again, but this time I controlled myself.

"Car tag!" I snorted.

"Yes," he replied. "It is a game often played in Germany by the N.S.K.K. boys."

He went on to say that quick-wittedness, sure action in an emergency, and reliability under any road conditions were taught by playing "car tag."

Our driver stopped his game, but the other drivers continued for some time. Correspondents who rode with the others admitted that they had been scared to death. Watching the antics of the cars ahead more than once caused me to believe that accidents were inevitable. Somehow, miraculously, they didn't happen.

Our guide rhapsodized on the N.S.K.K. for a while. He had been a member, and loved speed and the thrill of narrow escapes. Our caution amused him, but for another hour the driver was fairly careful, though he didn't take his foot off the accelerator any more than was absolutely necessary.

Shortly we came to Kostnice. We were to stop here to eat sandwiches which had been stowed in the rear of the car. There was a church we must see. All this went in one ear and out the other. I was so delighted to get out of the *Teufelwagen*,

or "devil car," as Dana termed it, that any excuse for a halt was more than welcome.

The church was something of a shock after our wild ride thus far. It was a shrine—decorated with thousands of skulls and bones. They were piled into designs eight and ten feet high. There were pyramids, villas, and ships, all made from the remains of thousands of dead.

Frederick the Great had fought a battle near by. The dead had been piled in rows outside the church. Eventually their bones had been left in the nave of the chapel and sanctified by priests.

On long tables special skulls were laid. These men had died violent deaths, and had gaping holes or hatchet-caused rents in their polished whiteness. An attendant pointed out the different types of wounds. This one had been hit squarely with a cannon-ball. That one had suffered death by a sword-thrust through his eye and head. There were shattered femur bones, smashed pelvises, and mangled ribs.

But all the skulls were not the result of the battle. There were hundreds that had been brought to the church by pilgrims from all over Bohemia and Moravia.

A legend tells that centuries before a monk had brought some of the sacred soil from the Garden of Gethsemane to the church. Because of this handful of earth, bodies were brought to be buried at the shrine. Few were interred because of lack of space and the great number that were brought. Though the stench of decaying bodies piled outside the church was terrible, the priests in charge still received the dead. Finally the influx stopped, and the skulls and bones, at the request of the mourners, were piled inside the church. The custom continued for years until the place resembled a charnel-house.

A broad-minded cleric suggested that designs should be made of the bones. Hence the weird interior. Dark, half-shadowed, the skulls seemed to leer. There were, of course, numerous ghost stories. Some were particularly horrible.

One was the supposed history of a woman who had consigned the bones of her husband to the church. She came back, the attendant assured us, every full moon and cried

endlessly in gasping sobs in a dark corner of one of the crypts. The man insisted that he had tried to place her ; but whenever he went with his lantern to the point the sounds came from they would suddenly be somewhere else. He had been searching for her for years. We asked if he didn't fear ghosts. Proudly he crossed himself and said that he who believes in God need fear nothing.

Typical tourist stuff? Well, maybe, and maybe not ; Kostnice is far off the beaten path.

Again in the cars, we ate our sandwiches. No sooner had the last bite started down our throats than we were off in a cloud of dust, blaring horns, and screaming tyres.

Another hour of touch-and-go on the roads and we reached another small village. Here we got out to look at an old monastery. The ceilings, vaulted and covered with beautiful paintings, were lovely. As we admired them the real object of our pause here became evident.

"I should like to say," began our guide, "that it is quite obvious that all this art and beauty is a direct inheritance from the Reich."

A Hungarian correspondent who was studying the walls and roof carefully disagreed.

"I do not think that is so," he interrupted. "The paintings are distinctly Czech."

"Everything of value culturally and otherwise in the Protectorate has come from Germany," argued the guide. "It is the greatest boon to the Czechs that once again they are returned to the fathership of Adolf Hitler and Germany !"

The Hungarian turned away, but the look on his face clearly indicated that he still knew the paintings to be of Czech origin. I spoke with him later. He deeply regretted his remark, was worrying about it.

"I should never have said what I did," he explained. "We stopped there so that the guides might illustrate their misbelief that Czech art is the offspring of German cultural effort. They will not like it in Berlin when they are told that I spoiled their little plan. I have no political interests. I am a newspaperman in Berlin to study. I am a newspaperman because that is the only way I can earn enough to pursue my lifework

—painting. I knew that we were to stop here, and I knew what the guides were to say. They were ordered to convince every one that the beautiful murals you saw were German, and not Czech.

“They will not like it in Berlin. I am not from a powerful nation such as the United States.”

Two weeks later he was gone. I inquired of Martin Ortocz, my Hungarian friend, about him.

Said Martin, “I do not know why he has left. And so suddenly! It is too bad. He was a fine man—a man who loved art much more than reporting.”

I agreed with him.

More hours of flirting with sudden death and we arrived in Pilsen.

Here I noticed armed guards patrolling parts of the city. These too carried bayonets on their rifles. We were told that they meant nothing. Mere routine!

We were to be shown through the famous Pilsener Urquell Brewery. But first we had to hear a long welcoming speech by the director in which he tonelessly expounded the joys of once again being under German rule.

Parts of his address were not so dry. He told how the brewery had come into existence a long while ago, how it was owned and run collectively by the townspeople. The water in Pilsen is particularly suited to the making of Pilsener. The beer became famous. More and more demands were made upon the villagers. They formed a corporation and built the brewery. The process of brewing is still a secret held by only a few selected Braumeister families. It is handed down from generation to generation.

We had a glass or two of the beer and cold meats. Beer in the brewery always seems a little better than it is elsewhere. The Pilsener we drank that afternoon was delicious.

Though the brewery manager and his assistants had been drinking it all their lives, they sipped their glasses with the relish of true connoisseurs. They revered each mouthful. Pride in accomplishment was never so evident. Brewing was their art and their life. Regimes might come and go, but their first consideration was—the beer!

We were taken through the brewery, and then into the cellars where the beer is kept in storage. The temperature is maintained at 33 Fahrenheit, one degree above freezing. The Pilsener brewery has nine miles of cellars filled with row after row of huge hogsheads. Our guides claimed that over half a million gallons were stored in the tunnels. We walked through a mile or two of the dank cellars and eventually emerged again into the hot sunlight.

More beer was served, this time from the workers' buckets. The workmen at the brewery are allowed three quarts a day in addition to their salary. It being noon, many of the men were on their way home. They were stopped, and cheerfully offered their pails to us.

The beer was refreshing, but there was another reason for the halt. As usual, little is done by the Nazis without forethought. The official photographer went into action. He arranged groups, asked a number of us to clamber on top of a brewery van and wave the half-emptied buckets. A Japanese correspondent with us was the centre of several carefully arranged shots. Llergo, the Mexican reporter, was featured in most of the pictures. They appeared in papers in the Protectorate and in Germany.

"We have a real surprise for you all," said a Propaganda Ministry escort. "Just this moment permission has been granted to go through the Skoda Munitions Works!"

This was amazing. Though correspondents had asked again and again to visit aeroplane factories and munitions plants, the answer had always been in the negative. The Skoda works were, and still are, running on night and day shifts.

Special works policemen were checking in a new shift of workers at the main gate. They examined a card that every man and woman held in his right hand as he or she passed through the entrance. The police were uniformed, but did not wear the swastika on any part of their garb. No pistols were at their belts.

I asked why this was and was told that the police were still Czech, as were the majority of the workers. Our guides attempted to create the impression that German control was maintained only in the administrative departments.

"You see," one of our escorts said, "the Czechs are quite happy and manage themselves nicely without trouble. It is not necessary to place either S.S. men or Party representatives among the workers. There has been absolutely no trouble here, and the possibility of revolt is so amusing that one must laugh!"

Upon inquiring further I learned that Nazi Party cells had now been set up in the great plant. For that reason it was not necessary to police the works with reliable Nazi strong-arm men.

The Nazi Party cell functions fully as efficiently as does the cell in Russia. Every forty persons are watched closely by a loyal Nazi. If any sign of what is termed "lack of adherence to Party principles" is noticed the cell leader reports and the dissenter is soon removed and disciplined.

I here found an opportunity to talk with a Czech who had been in America, and worked in the steel mills at Gary, Indiana. Beside a blast furnace, with the noise ringing in our ears, he told me some interesting facts. The rest of the party had gone on ahead. No one was close enough to hear our conversation.

"Regarding sabotage," he answered to my question, "there has been some, but it is dangerous. Over there you see the presses forming a propeller shaft."

Giant 25,000-ton hydraulic presses were lifting and falling on a molten mass of steel. Each blow crudely formed the outline of the shaft.

"That shaft has been pressed five times," he continued. "Each extra labour operation has been caused by an inexplicable incident. Several men have disappeared as a result. The shaft should have been finished by now. There still is a lot to do on it. In other parts of the plant other things have happened. Steel men know their business, and sabotage is an easy matter—especially in this light."

The windows of the huge shed were painted dark blue to conform with the blackout regulations. The whole shop was deeply shadowed.

"Are there many saboteurs here? Have they done much harm?" I asked.

"No. Only a few have the courage. It is dangerous. Unfortunately what has been done is small, will probably be even less in the future. The Gestapo has many agents among us."

In answer to another question, "The works police are Czechs, but they have no authoritative power. Key positions, of course, are held either by regular imported Party men or by secret police agents. As you noticed, side-arms have been taken away from the guards. There are camouflaged machine-gun posts everywhere in the plant. They are always manned. The Germans have left little to chance.

"We are literally prisoners, nearly slaves. We must work for the Nazis, but . . ."

And once more, "When the time is ripe . . ."

I was told that there were many American-born Czechs in the Skoda works who had returned to Czecho-Slovakia when their country seemed on the brink of war in 1938. Though my informant at the blast furnace refused to say whether he had taken part in any sabotage activities, he indicated that those who had been in America—in steel mills throughout the States—were most interested in embarrassing Nazi efforts in the munitions plant.

Dud shells and bombs have often fallen over the battle-fields of Europe. My friend hinted that the shell- and bomb-manufacturing units of Skoda were mostly closely guarded by Nazi spies and agents. But the fact that he mentioned it seemed significant to me. Perhaps Bullitt, the American Ambassador, who narrowly escaped death in Paris, may have a Czech to thank that the bomb which fell ten feet from him was a dud !

Finally I asked about the Reuter report, whether there had been shooting and street-fighting in Pilsen. He replied that the British story was false, but that just previous to its publication great numbers of workers in the plant had been temporarily detained and cross-questioned. Some did not return. More troops were brought to Pilsen. The plant came under doubly careful surveillance. Something had been up ; but, whatever it was, the Nazis nipped it in the bud.

"Maybe that was the basis of the report," he suggested.

I saw few smiling faces at Skoda. The workers did not look happy. They performed their jobs without enthusiasm. Their pay had been cut to less than was paid to steel workers in Germany, which in itself is a disgrace to labour in general.

In Europe, as in America, the steel worker is something of a privileged character in the ranks of labour. They maintain an *élite esprit de corps*, a private opinion of themselves that brooks no ill-treatment. But under Adolf Hitler that, along with other personal liberties, has fallen by the wayside.

We went through a good deal of the plant. To several departments we were refused admission, one being the section where shells and bombs were assembled. In the drawing office and general artillery assembling shops we had to pocket our cameras. Even the official photographer had to keep his movie camera at his side.

The artillery assembling rooms stretched for blocks. Guns of all types were being fitted with sights. The famous 105's stood in endless rows. Anti-aircraft pom-poms occupied one whole side of one of the bigger sheds. The efficient six-inch motorized, tractor-mounted weapons that bombarded Dunkirk and the Channel ports were in abundance. On long lathes naval guns were turned to the sharp edge of a super-sensitive cutting tool.

The forges and blast furnaces of other parts of the works were all going at top speed. Outside in the yard were long lines of locomotives, and an armoured train awaiting delivery. Tanks stood in parks, finished and ready for transportation to future battlefields in France.

The last thing that was shown to us was a massive siege mortar constructed for the German Army in 1914. It was similar to the type that battered the Belgian forts of Liège and Namur to crumbling ruins. Its calibre was 210 millimetres. Short-snouted, grim, and painted battle-brown, it seemed to characterize the cold efficiency of the German war machine, past and present.

"The gun," our guide pointed out, "is a monument!"

More hurtling over country roads and crashing wildly through villages, and we came to Iglau. The town is what



is called a "language island," a community completely German in speech and custom. Throughout eastern Europe there are many of these odd settlements. Iglau is in the middle of Czecho-Slovakia, far removed from Germany, yet a typical German town is not more wholly "*Deutsch*" than this small village.

The Nazis made much of the advance to Iglau when the Protectorate was invaded. A great celebration greeted the Führer's soldiers when they entered Iglau. When our chauffeurs drove into the town they were careful. The people were not forced to hug the walls in terror as our cars passed, as in other villages we had gone through. Our speed was commensurate with the respect the Sudeten drivers paid to a German community.

We were driven through the village. At one point the car stopped.

"These are old German barracks," our guide expounded. "Before the last war a German heavy-artillery contingent was quartered here. The same regiment has once again made the buildings its training-post."

In answer to my question of what had occupied the place since 1918 and until the Germans marched into Czecho-Slovakia he said, "Oh, I believe the Czech Army maintained a small garrison here, but now it is German again."

We drove back to an inn, where we had coffee—real coffee—and what a joy that was! Even though I have had many a fine cup of genuine coffee since returning from Germany, I never shall cease to respect the enjoyment of good coffee! I never missed its fragrant tastiness until I couldn't get it, and then appreciation was born!

In Prague, Pilsen, Brünn, and Iglau real coffee was still obtainable. Though we believed no one could appreciate it more than we, the look of beatific joy that spread over the faces of the Germans in our party was far more convincing than our American ejaculations.

Coffee! How little we realize what the lack of it can mean! If Germans were allowed to choose anyone of the things that they enjoyed before the war I believe they would ask that good coffee might be restored. Its absence caused

more grumbling than anything else that has descended upon Germany along with Adolf Hitler.

The taproom was filled with German soldiers. Their conversation revolved around Iglau, the girls they had met there, and there was a long discussion about what would happen when the Führer had led them to victory. They were confident, as believing as children, yet there was nothing said of Party activities. Everything was army talk, plus amorous triumphs, and—as completely incongruous as only Germans can be—a hot argument about the orchestration of a popular light opera.

The room buzzed with conversation. The men relaxed. Their bayonets and belts hung on hooks. They slouched, stretching their booted legs at length. Feldwebel, Unteroffizier, and private fraternized freely. They seemed as happy and satisfied as any group of men could be.

Our *Kaffee*, *Kraftbrühe* (soup), and *Brot* finished, we left the taproom. Outside, we still heard the hum of talk, and now the wheeze of a *Ziehharmonika*. As we climbed into the cars the accordion swung into the soldier song "Ericka." As we left the square behind, voices—hearty, full-throated—echoed, singing the song in chorus.

In Brünn we were taken to the Rathaus; that was a mistake. The reception committee had gone to the hotel, where we were to be wined and dined by the mayor.

I remember three things about the Rathaus of Brünn. One was the long climb up what seemed dozens of flights of stairs, only to find that we were not expected there, and then the descent, each step a pure expression of disgust at the wasted effort.

The second was the iron figure of a dragon that hangs over the edge of the caves. Most town halls in Germany and Czecho-Slovakia are elaborate, but the crouching form of the dragon, its tongue protruding a foot, exemplifies the love of the ornate that the architect incorporated into his design a hundred years ago. All the fiery belief in legend and fairy tale was put into that dragon. Its claws, spread and clutching the roof, seemed real. The tail appeared to be about to whip out angrily. The eyes gleamed with ferocity. Back

arched and fangs bared, the fantastic figure left an unforgettable impression.

I remarked upon the realism of the dragon to the guide.

He answered, "Obviously from the hands of a German craftsman."

I lost my enthusiasm.

The third thing was the council room. It is not in use now. The town is run from Nazi Party headquarters by a special *Bürgermeister* from the Reich. The room, high-ceilinged and rectangular in shape, is covered from floor to top moulding with family crests carved in wood and brilliantly painted.

They are the coats-of-arms of the Czech families who have sat in the council for hundreds of years. In spaces between the crests are portraits of the overlords who ruled the community and the countryside. It is a beautiful room. The paintings are well done, the woodwork extraordinary.

"It is probable that German artists effected the work you see here," said the guide.

We were driven to the hotel. The banquet, speeches and all, was ready.

It turned out to be a splendid meal. Delicious soup, goose, several well-prepared vegetables, and a tasty *Kuchen* were served. Rhine wine, beer, and schnapps appeared beside our plates throughout the meal.

"Is it not good?" asked a young German in Party uniform sitting next to me.

He was pleasant, more than polite, and was trying very hard to make me feel completely at ease. Our group had been seated apart, each correspondent several places away from another. Between were black and brown uniforms. Dana and I had stuck together, but when we tried to sit next to each other we were directed to places far enough away to prevent us from talking.

"Yes," I said.

"Do you find the food as bad in Germany as we have heard?"

I was surprised at the question. Party men do not criticize the Reich, either at home or abroad. Remarking again upon

the excellence of the meal, he stated that he had received letters from his family in Germany and that conditions in Berlin were getting worse as the food-cards—particularly the meat coupons—never lasted the full time they were supposed to.

He sent hams and geese when he could, but this was frowned upon by his Party superior. "Sacrifice is the prior demand of the Führer," he was told. His family must make theirs without help from anyone.

"Down here, in the Protectorate," he said, "we eat well; but soon the food will be rationed, as it is in the Reich. The German loves his food. It is too bad that we shall have to be careful with it."

"Do many of you think that here?" I probed.

He grew silent, changed the subject. I would not say that he was disloyal to the Party or Hitler in any way, but the shortage of food at home worried him.

We were driven through Brünn and asked to note any signs of revolution, as Reuters had claimed. There were none. But again, back in a café having a last cup of coffee, a story came out in a conversation with a Czech. Previous to the British report there had been many arrests. If anything was about to happen it had been stopped before it gained either impetus or strength.

"Treachery!" my friend hissed. He could say nothing more. We were joined by Germans in uniform. Shortly he excused himself.

Tables were pushed together as our group reassembled from various parts of the coffee-house. Cups of coffee were served with whipped cream heaped high over their rims. Every one relished the treat. More cups were served, then pastry and schnapps.

Soon the horns of our cars blew vigorously. We should not get back to Prague until late in the evening, and to our driver, homeward bound to a fast-cooling supper, the prospect did not appeal.

After being escorted out of Brünn with the streets lined with cheering people, and a parade of cars with official flags following for a way, I discovered that I had guessed correctly.

This time Dana and I were in the car. The man at the wheel drove even more madly than before, and at this time at night over a different route. Our entreaties did no good. He stated flatly that unless he hurried he would get no supper. With two exceptions we all maintained a grim silence most of the way.

The first break came when the driver suddenly began laughing—not far out of Brünn. We asked him what the joke was.

“I was remembering our leaving Brünn,” he offered. “All the people cheering and the streets lined with them!”

“What was so amusing in that?” asked Dana.

“Only this,” he explained. “They had been ordered to turn out for you and to cheer! I talked with some. They were grumbling when they got the order. Some lost half a day’s work, because they had to come in from the country to be present.”

Our departure from Brünn with flags waving and crowds had surprised us. That we were there was not important, except that the Nazis cannot refrain from making as much as possible out of anything that even vaguely smacks of officialdom. Moreover, the crowd may have been ordered out to prove to us that there was no outward revolt in Brünn. At any rate, Dana and I privately expressed our disgust.

Like so much else in the Reich, outward appearance is stressed regardless of spontaneity. There was no reason for crowds lining the streets. It was an honour, perhaps, but, forced upon the Czechs for our benefit, it lost any significance except as still another reason for abhorring Nazi methods.

The second time we spoke it was much more sharply. We had rushed through several villages at top speed. At the edge of one the driver suddenly brought the car to a screaming, skidding stop. How he saw the dog that had stepped into the road was beyond me, for he had put on the black-out-regulated headlight shades some time before.

A group of people, seeing the speed at which we were coming, had hurried to the sides of the road and pressed against the walls. A dog, startled by the noise of the car—the throttle

was wide open, of course—had walked directly in front of the car.

The driver got out, unstrapping his pistol holster as he went. Several men edged up to the car. The driver began to curse the owner of the dog in the vilest terms. The man answered back briefly in Czech. The others came closer to the car.

They were all Czechs. The swastika flew from our bumpers. The situation looked bad for a moment. It was a small village ; and the man who had received the cursing was muttering, an angry expression on his face. The driver gestured as if he were going to shoot the dog. Then he addressed every one standing near the car. They were fools to allow a dog to get in the way of an official car. Several people might have been killed.

For a moment I was sure the Czechs were going to rush him. Then as he threatened again, this time without swearing, they seemed to fall back. He got into the car, and we started off again with the same speed. Dana and I lost our tempers.

We insisted that he should slow down passing through villages. It was a pleasure to yell a little at him after his treatment of the Czechs. If he had been going slower he would not have had to stop. The dog probably wouldn't have stepped into the road. Not only his passengers, but several of the people at the side of the road might have been killed. He must go at a more reasonable speed through other villages ahead.

He took it passively, agreed to be careful, and apparently forgot the whole incident. Though we did go through other towns a little more slowly than previously, before we got to Prague we had nearly killed a cow, a man, and another dog. Each time we had to come to squealing stops. Once it was not his fault, but each time he would proceed more cautiously for a mile or so.

In front of the hotel he said good-bye courteously as if nothing had happened. Dana and I readily agreed that we hoped he had missed his supper completely. I know I had indigestion all through mine !

The next evening we were taken to the Rathaus in Prague for an official farewell by the Bürgermeister and high Nazis in the Protectorate. Here we stood for forty-five minutes while photographers set off their flashlights endlessly, always being careful to include the Nazi governor in every shot. He read a long speech which said little. We were given a copy afterwards. How a man could have written so many pages which said three things is a mystery to me. He welcomed us, hoped we like the Protectorate, and expressed his assurance that we had seen no sign of revolt in his dominion.

When we left the hotel the next day for the station and Berlin several people came quietly up to Dana, Al, and me, and said, "When you write for your papers in America tell them to stand by Czecho-Slovakia. It is not dead—and when the time is ripe . . ."

They all used the same phrase. It kept ringing in my ears.

"When the time is ripe . . ."

Since then Czecho-Slovakia has been rendered more helpless daily. There are stories of hidden petrol stores the Reich would like to appropriate, of thousands of machine-guns and small arms that never were turned over to the invaders when the Army was disbanded and its material incorporated into German military might. But to offset these thousands of Czech workers have been sent into Germany. They have been replaced by German farmers, who receive land taken from its rightful owners without compensation—who are financed amply until they are well established at the expense of the Czechs.

If a farm is particularly choice it does not remain long in the hands of its Czech owner. He must sell at a tremendous loss. At present buying and selling of goods is strictly regulated. All food is rationed; and where we saw queues standing in front of stores to buy coffee and shoes, they now wait hours for all articles necessary to living. Customs barriers have long since been removed. Germans were allowed to rush into the Protectorate as tourists and buy everything they needed with marks worth much more than Czech kronen, after they were still further pushed downward by German regulation.

German culture is being forced upon the country. The fist and heel of Hitlerism is everywhere, crushing the last vestige of liberty from a people who made liberty a shrine of righteousness—who made it work more smoothly than any other Government in Europe ever has.

But I do not believe the last chapter of Czech history has been written.



## CHAPTER VIII

### PLUNDER AND DESOLATION

*YOU* are going to Warsaw! Be at the Ministry of Propaganda in half an hour with warm clothes. Better bring cigarettes and some sandwiches. We were lucky to get you included in the trip. Only fifteen are going! Come down as soon as you can!"

The office rang off. I hurried back to my room from the 'phone. In ten minutes I was dressed—and in another ten, my pockets bulging with cigarettes, and with a small bag crammed with sweaters, I made for the Esplanade Hotel and the office.

I arrived at the Ministry of Propaganda in time to see other correspondents piling into a waiting military bus.

Joe Grigg, of the United Press, was among the newsmen. We settled back in a seat. In front of us were Jugoslavs; behind, the Mexican correspondent, Llergo. Near the driver were two Japs, and at their sides a brace of swarthy Italians. A tall Spaniard spoke across the aisle to a Czech friend. There were several others.

After an hour's ride we came to the Rangsdorf Sport-flughafen, or civil airport, outside Berlin. Tempelhof, the official Berlin landing-field before the war, had long since been taken over by the Air Force, and was forbidden territory for foreign eyes.

Two Junkers 52 troop transport planes stood in front of the hangars with Boemer, the Press Chief, and a dozen other officials waiting. The planes did not look inviting. They were badly in need of a painting—obviously were ancient crates! I mentioned my doubts to Joe. He offered, "Oh, well, they'll probably get us there!"

That was small comfort! But I climbed in with the rest to a long-windowed cabin with wooden benches running the length of each side. I saw the backs of two pilots through

the door to the front compartment. A stolid Air Force Unter-offizier sat on the port side near us. By his side, in what had been a lavatory, were boxes of ammunition and a light machine-gun.

Presently the engines began to roar and the ships rolled down the field, taking off into the wind. The aileron wires appeared rusty from the windows, and, despite the noise, I was certain I heard weary creaks throughout the body of that old transport plane.

We were heading towards the east. Because of the arrangement of the benches, we sat facing each other, and had to crane our necks to look out. I told Joe, sitting next to me, that I still didn't like the look of the plane.

"Cheer up," he answered in my ear. "I rode one of these old crates through a lightning storm once—and, anyway, if your day's coming there's not much you can do about it!"

"Well, at least there's an officer at the controls who must know his business," I suggested.

Joe informed me that he had noticed the men who had boarded the ship. There was no Air Force rank with us higher than a Feldwebel, or sergeant-major!

Meanwhile the hills of Germany unfolded gently as we pushed eastward at about ninety miles an hour. The seats began to get hard. It was difficult to carry on a conversation because of the drone of the engines. I signalled to the man sitting in the rear, indicating a query as to whether he ever used the machine-gun by his side.

He grinned and nodded an all-too-willing assent!

Soon we were over Poland and began to see shell-holes and bomb-craters. Here and there were completely ruined towns, their buildings shattered skeletons of charred timbers and heaps of bricks. Along the main roads we saw columns of motorized equipment and supply-trains drawn by horses. Around what had been air-fields the ground was literally pitted with bomb-craters. One field must have had over three hundred gaping holes caused by heavy high-explosive bombs.

Suddenly the man near me pulled out the machine-gun and explained that a distant plane appeared to be Polish—

perhaps one of the very few left after the extermination of the Polish Air Force. We altered our course slightly, but in a moment two Messerschmitt 109 fighters took the air a mile to starboard, and the planes, including the suspicious craft, disappeared to the south-east. I yelled in the man's ear that I would not care to be in the plane if we were attacked. He replied that, despite his weapon and the generally poor flying ability of the Poles, we still shouldn't have much of a chance in our slow transport plane.

Towards evening we landed at Lodz. The field was surrounded by anti-aircraft guns, and Air Force men patrolled the airport limits. As we climbed out of the plane we were met by a delegation of officers. They rattled on for fifteen minutes welcoming us. No one paid any attention to our impatience. We were anxious to get to a hotel and, we hoped, a warm meal.

Climbing into buses, we bumped into Lodz over muddy, rutted roads and irregular paving.

Lodz was a dismal sight. Its dreary industrial appearance was accentuated by the dirt and grime that covered everything. Few vehicles passed us that were not of a military nature. A number of droshkies, the Victoria type of horse-drawn carriage of eastern Europe, were still in the streets. The horses, however, were feeble nags, and the drivers old and decrepit. The rest of the traffic consisted of continuous streams of Army staff cars, tanks, and supply-wagons.

Lodz was one of the biggest manufacturing centres of Poland. There was little more to be seen than brick factories and long lines of squalid tenements built of weather-boarding and mud.

The city had a population that was two-thirds Jewish, and at that time we saw orthodox beards, black gabardine, and wool *Mützen*, or caps, everywhere. Now, reliable sources assert, most of the Jews in Lodz have been "removed."

After what seemed like a long ride we arrived at the Metropole Hotel. The Grand Hotel, the best the city had to offer, was occupied by the High Command Staff of the district. There was no room there for us. The next best hostelry in Lodz was the Metropole, and a more flea-bitten, wretched,

and dirty place to stay at would be hard to find west of Suez ! Poland is not noted for fine resorts or luxurious hotels, but the Metropole certainly sounded new depths in hotel accommodation for most of us. It had turned bitterly cold. Autumn in Poland usually means freezing weather, and October 1939 was no exception !

Remembering the trip to Danzig, I had thought to bring along some Steinhäger. Before a dinner given for us by the officers of the High Command some semblance of heat re-entered our already chilled bodies.

My room had a bed in it, a completely defunct radiator, two chairs, and a moth-eaten rug. Double windows opened out on to a tiny balcony. The windows did not fit their casements. Chinks half an inch wide allowed the wind to whistle dismally through the room. It was so cold that we did not even remove our overcoats ! With a final toast to American comforts far away, I recorked the Steinhäger.

Joe said he would check up on what was happening downstairs. We had heard a bus drive up and knew we were scheduled to leave for the Grand Hotel in a few minutes. Joe did not return.

He told me afterwards that he had arrived in the lobby, if with a pine-wood desk and two straight-backed chairs a place could be called that, just in time to be hurried into the bus for the Grand Hotel. An orderly had promised to go upstairs and give me fifteen minutes' notice before the bus left. The orderly never bothered. Presently I left the room.

Downstairs I was told in a mixture of Polish and broken German that every one had gone. When I asked where the Grand Hotel was the directions received were bewildering. By the use of sign language and a map I got a general idea.

With the plunder of the rich farmland round Lodz available, the officers had spread a sumptuous feast. The most expensive restaurant in Berlin could not have equalled the extent of the repast.

Goose, half a dozen fresh vegetables, real coffee, and double helpings of ice-cream were only part of the meal. There was *borsch*, beer, and mountains of *Sauerkraut*. Perhaps this

does not sound purely regal in the sense of a banquet, but in war-time to receive nearly everything impossible to get in Germany itself made the feast one to be remembered. The resources of the countryside had been well organized round Lodz since the bulk of the Army had passed on to Warsaw.

Queries as to where such bountiful supplies came from and how they were acquired evoked two remarks in particular from German officers at the table. One of them said, "But this is Poland! We have conquered her! Everything must be clear to you!" From another Oberleutnant. "Poland is a great storehouse—and has been aching to grace German tables with her agricultural riches!" The tone of his statement was filled with sarcasm and amusement.

After dinner several of us decided to go for a walk. It was nearing midnight. No one was on the streets except a pair of German officers staggering to their quarters after a night's drinking.

Curfew in Lodz was at ten o'clock, and no one except officers and soldiers on patrol was allowed on the streets. Being foreign journalists, we were excepted from the general rule. However, in the city's principal square we ran into half a dozen Air Force men unloading petrol drums from a lorry.

They asked sharply who we were. When we had identified ourselves they stopped work to talk. They were all under twenty-one—big, strapping lads—and insisted that we should listen to their version of what was going to happen to the Allies.

"Every one knows without a doubt," said a soldier, "that before the month is out Russia, Italy, and Spain will come in on Germany's side. Then we shall crush the Allies and Chamberlain, as well as Churchill and his Navy, without any trouble at all!"

We demurred a little, saying that such possibilities seemed unlikely at this time. Their insistence and unswerving belief in what they had said prompted curiosity as to where they had received their information. They assured us that the story had been released by their "Propaganda-Kompanie," and that Goebbels was always right.

"What if these things do not come to pass before the first of December?" I suggested.

They laughed long and loud, replying with spirit that they had the real dope, that we newspapermen had better check up again! We were unable to evince the slightest doubt of their statements without receiving a barrage of merriment at our incredulity.

We returned to the Hotel Metropole. Now came the problem whether I should get undressed and into bed or simply lie down in my overcoat, throwing a blanket over me. After struggling with the decision for some minutes, while the cold air poured audibly into the room through the chinks in the window, I decided I should be more comfortable in pyjamas.

Over my pyjama coat I slipped two sweaters. My overcoat was on top of the two paper-thin blankets the Hotel Metropole supplied. Without trying, I knew it would be foolish to ask for more bedding! Others in the party did request additional bedclothes and had been met first with an amused smile, then a stream of Polish—and no blankets!

I was not the only inhabitant of the bed. In the morning I was horrified to note red splotches from my knees to my armpits. I should have known better, but the hopes of a good night's rest had led me to get undressed. Polish bed-bugs, I'm certain, are among the most virulent in the world. They left their marks! For more than three weeks my body was one mass of itching exasperation!

At a quarter to six buses arrived in front of the hotel. We clambered into them and started for Warsaw.

Lodz was already awake. Hundreds of people walked quickly along in the frosty air, bound for their work. What they may have been I was never clearly told, as no factories were open at the time. For every civilian one saw four or five soldiers and S.S. men.

Lodz had escaped both fighting and bombing, as the Polish armies had left the city without threatening resistance to the German advance in this area.

In the dawn the squalor of long blocks of tenements did not change our first bad impression of the one-time woollen

mill metropolis. Many of the people we saw were gaunt, dressed in rags, and generally utterly miserable in appearance.

A few miles along the road to Warsaw we began seeing evidence of battle. Strangely, apart from a bridge or two destroyed and hurriedly repaired, no shell or bomb had hit directly on the road. There were hundreds of shell-holes and bomb-craters flanking the highway.

Every mile or so we saw a wrecked car or tank. Of the villages we passed through certain parts were gutted by shells—totally destroyed—though the rest of the town was untouched. An officer explained that this was due to activities of Poles who were not soldiers, and who had chosen to resist amid three or four houses in which lived Polish sympathizers.

Other villages were total wrecks. In these there were few houses whose roofs had not disappeared in piles of charred planking and shell-riddled walls. The terrific effect of bombs was evident—wherever one had hit not only was there a deep hole, but piles of dirt, bricks, and debris were heaped as high as ten feet round the crater.

Altogether, between Lodz and Warsaw, we saw eight towns which had been completely burned out. The faces of the people were terrible masks. And their stares, as they watched Nazi motor-cycle runners and field police, reflected the despair they felt. It was not an uncommon sight to see the arm or leg of some unfortunate Pole protruding from pyramids of wreckage.

At cross-roads about fifteen miles from Warsaw we began passing long trains of artillery and supplies. The men rode on their ammunition-wagons in sleepy, sprawling attitudes. The heads of the horses drooped as they plodded along. The columns consisted of 155-millimetre gun-howitzers—all horse-drawn—and lengthy lines of supply-wagons, many of which had been taken from Polish farms by the Nazis.

The men had been on the march for days, always moving forward with little time off for rest—trying vainly to keep up with the swift advance of the motorized units. They were attached to infantry divisions and were classified by an officer

with us as 'Reserve Artillery,' and therefore slightly older men made up most of the *personnel*.

Many times we noted a Polish artillery cart that had been abandoned. Near by would be the deserted guns of a battery. The weapons were 155-millimetre howitzers, and old French seventy-fives—both 1914 models. Then for miles we passed what had been an impromptu ammunition dump. This had been left by the Poles in their hurried retreat. There had been no time to stack the wicker cases of shells properly. They were strewn alongside the road, some half open, others obviously tossed from lorries with no sense of order in mind. A German in the bus called our attention to what he termed the slipshod manner in which the Poles operated militarily.

"Of course," he went on, "they were being machine-gunned and harassed by Stuka dive-bombing planes while they tried to establish a dump at this point. It may have made some difference."

We silently nodded agreement.

First singly, and then in small groups, Poles in full uniform, but with no equipment, passed along opposite the advancing artillery. We asked who they were, and why they were not guarded as prisoners. A Hauptmann with us stated that they had been released from prison camps to return to their farms. They were expected to do their autumn planting and clean up their acres so that Germany might count on grain and vegetable shipments from Poland in the spring. The Poles were the picture of dejection, some stumbling along in the bitter cold air with no shoes and with bloody bandages wrapped round their feet. Whenever our buses halted for a short time to allow us to stretch our legs, I noticed that the officers and soldiers with us made a point of facing the straggling groups of ex-prisoners and receiving their salute—except that it was not a military salute, but a doffing of their caps and a deep bow.

By way of explanation we were told that when the men were released they were informed that no longer could they consider themselves soldiers, or even prisoners of war, but must regard themselves now as being subjects of Germany—and freed by the grace of Adolf Hitler !



I asked how many Poles were allowed to return home. "Thousands!" was the answer. Yet in Warsaw and back in Berlin two different stories were told. A reliable informant in the Polish capital related that this group of ex-Polish soldiers was only about three thousand in number and that prisoners were set free chiefly in the Warsaw area. In Berlin a Ministry of Propaganda spokesman assured me that no one who had worn uniform under the Polish eagle and had been captured was freed. The spokesman said that more than three hundred thousand Polish prisoners had been brought to Germany to work for the Reich.

Farther along was another cross-road. Here I witnessed endless streams of refugees going in both directions, some back to Warsaw and others away from it.

These, perhaps, are the saddest sight of any war. They trudged along, bundles over their shoulders holding all they could salvage and carry, or sat in misery on top of an overloaded farm wagon drawn by skeletons of horses—beasts so emaciated that the Germans ignored their appropriation!

Nearer the city I saw a droshky filled with a dozen nuns. Their stiff linen collars were smudged with dirt; several of the grey habits the group wore were smeared with dried blood. They looked to neither left nor right, but stolidly at the bag of bones that pulled their droshky.

People of all types and stations were in the columns. I saw distinguished, bearded aristocrats, their blonde wives limping along behind them, peasants whose eyes were still filled with terror, children whose faces were old. All were dirty, sleepless, and full of an inherent fear that only their fatigue lulled.

One of the saddest sights was a young man and his wife. He pushed the handlebars of a bicycle while she balanced a small coffin on the seat. An altar-cloth lay crosswise over the coffin. They were not crying, showed no evidence of tears. The man's fevered eyes held a wild, hard stare which cursed every grey uniform that passed. The woman's attitude, as she balanced the cycle's burden, was stark bitterness so intense that it seemed to consume her—hide those things that made her human!

There was no sign of food in any of the wagons or bundles that were so wearily dragged along. Presently the road widened, and a third column pushed into the highway from a farm lane. The column was composed of more Army supply-wagons heaped high with potatoes, cabbages, and turnips. It moved fairly rapidly, with the drivers shouting at their well-fed horses and occasionally cracking whips. Refugees kept out of the way of the clattering wagons.

The road was rutted and full of holes. Occasionally a turnip or potato would bounce off a heavily laden vehicle. When it fell, heedless of grinding wheels and smartly trotting horses, an immediate fight took place in the refugee columns, as people dived for the treasured vegetable. Otherwise the unfortunates kept to the side of the road.

I saw one of these fights as we pulled up to allow a motorcycle company to pass. Three men and two women made a sudden lunge at a fat cabbage that had fallen from one of the wagons.

One of the women jumped from a farm wagon, landing on her face as she grabbed for the prize. The men and the other woman saw it at the same time. The slow-moving refugee columns stopped to watch. A hopeful group gathered round the contestants, ready should one step back. There was no more room for others round the cabbage.

After three minutes of vicious punching, scratching, and biting a man emerged with the cabbage under his arm and a bloody knife in his hand. The woman who had jumped from the wagon lay unconscious on the ground. The rest walked away nursing their wounds.

Two of the men wiped great gashes in their faces with ragged forearms. The second woman held both hands over her eyes. When she took them away for a moment I saw that she had been brutally scratched. A long wound from her temple to her chin spilled streams of blood over the front of her torn dress. Some one came to the rescue of the woman who still lay on the ground. She was pulled to the side of the road, where, after a moment, she regained consciousness, choking and spitting teeth. The Nazi soldiers offered no aid to any of the fighters, hardly noticed the affair.

The winner cut a piece out of the cabbage with his bloody knife and began to eat hungrily. No one challenged him, and the refugee columns began to move again.

I saw several of these fights for scraps of food as we came closer to Warsaw. They were not conducted with either hate or predetermination, but were the actions of people so mad for food that animal instinct governed all their motives.

Roads became congested with more refugees, going and coming, soldiers, lorries, guns and scores of motor-cycles as we finally reached the outskirts of Warsaw and pulled into a yard the surroundings of which were completely smashed, bombed, and burned.

On all sides I saw nothing but skeleton walls, great piles of rubble, and thin wisps of smoke. Here was the cartoonist's picturization of war in reality. No artist, letting his imagination run wild, ever painted a more gruesome, terrible picture of wanton destruction!

People crept over the ruins, stopping to pull at the end of a bedstead or picking away at piles of brick. In the distance great clouds of smoke obscured the sun. The whole aspect was hellish. I turned my back and walked across the road. This, then, was the aftermath of war in all its terror and rapaciousness! At Gydnia, Oxhoeft, and other places I had seen battles, but never destruction so complete as this.

I caught up the rest of our party. We stepped gingerly around shell-holes to a rear courtyard. Field police lined the way—grim, brutal men with riot guns under their arms, and Hitler moustaches sprouting beneath their iron helmets.

As we clustered together a German major instructed his *aide de camp* and a pair of sergeants.

They pulled big maps out of field brief cases and tacked them along a fence. While they did this I looked about me. On the left were the remains of an aeroplane factory. It was a ruin of twisted girders and charred masonry. What had been planes in the making now were masses of fused metal and shredded fuselage. A soldier pointed out that most of the walls still stood because direct hits on the roof, and fire, were all that had been necessary.

"Then," he said proudly, "the place burned, and we saved bombs!"

But this wreckage was not the result of the recent terrible two days of intensive bombardment. The plant had been destroyed early in the Polish campaign—together with all the other aeroplane factories in Poland.

I turned away. To the right was a glimpse of the scene of carnage I had first observed when I crossed the road. In front of me was the major, about to begin his lecture, and beyond his stiff figure the columns of desperate refugees. Behind me was a wall reinforced by planks hastily wedged into the ground by German engineers so that it would not collapse.

One of the orderlies handed the major a pointer. Our lecturer cleared his throat mightily.

"I am going to prove to your satisfaction, gentlemen," he began, "that Warsaw was a fortified city. I shall also relate in some detail our successful methods of attack, and why we were able to force a complete surrender so quickly."

His face was not unkind—yet he shouted his words, clipping each syllable sharply. Those in the front rank of the correspondents wiped their faces surreptitiously. Their handkerchiefs hid broad grins. The major was being very military, as only a German officer believing he must create that effect can be! He rasped words in his throat and pushed them out—staccato as machine-gun fire—and then continued with roaring phrases creditably imitating artillery barrages.

His German was so formal and so filled with the complexities of language the Nazis love so dearly that it was difficult to follow him. Others thought the same as I and ceased making notes. What he was illustrating was clear on the maps, anyway. I noted that they were not Army maps, but were stamped "Propaganda Ministry."

At that time Goebbels was anxious to have the world believe that it had been a necessity to take Warsaw, and that it should be regarded as an armed fortress because guns, anti-aircraft and otherwise, were placed in the parks and squares. The Poles had hoped to make their capital another

Madrid, holding out before German onslaughts for the duration of the war.

The major's tones rattled and rumbled about us. I could see that the task was a little out of his line. He had been ordered, apparently, to impress the visiting journalists with the fact that, despite the awful damage done, the taking of Warsaw was a purely military move. In his regimental mess it could have been settled with two sentences and an ordnance map. While our sympathies were with the Poles, we did not question the military aims followed in the siege operations.

The sacking of the city was a military necessity, accepted in the rules of 'civilized' warfare. Warsaw had been fortified—unfortunately!

As the officer progressed in his dissertation I noticed that his voice was beginning to feel the strain. Finally he concluded, and we piled back into the cars bound for Fort Mokotovskie. In the fort we were met by a German general of infantry. He had little to say, briefly explaining that his regiment had taken both the fort and the long, hastily built combination tank-trap and trench that connected the earth-works of Mokotovskie with the suburb of Mokotov.

Some of the heaviest fighting took place in front of the trench. The fort itself, an old Great War relic, was not strongly defended by the Poles—was not the key to the position. Rather, the trench was the main objective.

It was strange to walk about the grass-covered ramparts of Mokotovskie and see little sign of damage, while just beyond the area round the trench was scarred by the marks of hundreds of shells. I saw an old field-piece on top of the ramparts of the fort. Asking an officer, I was told that the gun was fired once during the siege, and, instead of coming near its target, the old-fashioned shell had landed amid Polish troops, killing several and wounding many others.

In describing what happened the German officer said, "You see how foolish it was for the Poles to resist the mightiest army in the world with such antiquated equipment!"

We followed the red-lapelled general and his staff along the course of the trench, some five hundred yards from fort

to town. The general was not influenced by the dictates of propaganda. He said frankly that the defenders of Warsaw had held out in the trench for three days, and that constant attacks by his men in ever-increasing numbers were necessary before the Poles were driven from the obstacle. Tanks were useless because of the width and depth of the trench. He stated that numerous Iron Crosses were won by the Germans at this point.

Although the dead were said to have been removed, a sickening stench still clung to the trench. Its bottom was filled with cloying mud, which, we were informed, was several feet deep. This had not been plumbed, and it was possible that the smell came from bodies under the slime, asserted a staff officer.

The far end of the trench ran into the streets of Mokotov.

This suburb had been one of the prettiest parts of Warsaw, but now was a slaughterhouse of wrecked houses, barricades, and shell-holes. Two buildings in particular had seen much of the fighting. They had been uncompleted apartment houses surrounded by scaffolding. There was little left of the structures. We were not allowed to go near the ruins, as it was suspected that mines had been set there by the retreating Poles. The buildings were bombed and partially burned, as well as thoroughly shelled.

The scaffolding when hit threw wooden splinters everywhere. A Polish prisoner told an officer with us that to him at that point the battle had assumed the character of an old time sea fight of wooden ships. Nearly all the defenders were wounded or killed—most of the casualties being caused by the barbed splinters of wood, which flew about as effectively as shrapnel.

As we walked through the streets of Mokotov the general indicated places of interest.

"Here is where Leutnant Schmidt won his Iron Cross, first class," he announced. "He led a platoon of our brave soldiers into the house across the way. Though they were met with a shower of grenades and heavy machine-gun fire, they took the defence position, afterwards blowing it up!"

Then the general illustrated with gestures a fine example of machine-gun cross-fire. "A hundred Poles were caught in the steel V of our guns and killed outright. No one could live who was unfortunate enough to be within the deadly trap of our gunners," he added. Farther along he pointed at another shattered dwelling, "Here we were temporarily stopped by a houseful of women and children who effected well-aimed rifle-fire and operated a grenade-thrower. They were finished off by heavy artillery not far away!"

I have written that he pointed at a "dwelling." I should have said that he referred to a hole in the ground—an exposed basement filled with broken bricks, plaster, and stained bits of cloth.

Every street was blocked with a tank-trap or barricade. Lagging behind the rest, I walked towards one of the houses still left standing—though its upper storey had been holed many times by shells.

I stopped in front of a kitchen door. Inside a Polish woman was boiling some water—using sticks of wood on an iron griddle and holding the pot in her hand. On the table was half a turnip. At her skirts stood two little children.

She paid no attention to me. Sunlight poured in from a gaping hole in the ceiling, and everything was in a state of wreckage. She continued to cook the meal. I asked her in German where her husband was. She answered in Polish in surly tones. The children stared at me in wild-eyed fear. I left and caught up the others.

They were at the end of the street inspecting a barricade. A field-gun had been placed in a trench dug between two houses. The gun was gone. Sandbags covered the position. They were torn and ripped to pieces, showing the intensity of the attacks that the barricade had undergone.

Behind the gun-pit was a rude dugout in which I discovered four live grenades. The pins were still in them. I called a guide's attention to the Mills bombs. He turned pale, ordered a soldier to remove the grenades, and gave instructions for a thorough investigation of the people still living on both sides of the emplacement. Many Mokotov residents, having no place to go to, stayed in their half-destroyed homes.

I was told later by an Air Force officer who was in the party that every one who lived in the two suspect houses had been arrested "for investigation" !

As we were leaving the barricade I saw a Polish bayonet in its scabbard stuck in the side of a sandbag. I pulled it out. It is my only souvenir of Warsaw. I showed it to an Oberleutnant. He examined it, taking the blade from its case. It was covered all over with a thick coating of grease.

"The soldier who owned this," he remarked, "knew how to care for his equipment. It is surprising ! Most of them don't know which end to use !"

Turning the bayonet over in his hands, he affirmed that it was a good one and nearly approached the perfection of German steel. The fact seemed to startle him. He had not been in action, being attached to the War Office in Berlin. Guilelessly he stated, "We were told that all Polish bayonets were of a vastly inferior quality."



## CHAPTER IX

### "GENTLEMEN, YOU HAVE SEEN FOR YOURSELVES"

WE were driven through the city of Warsaw. It was a drive of horror. I saw no window-pane unbroken and no house that did not bear the mark of shell or bomb.

Houses were built close together in solid blocks, and averaged four storeys in height. Every fourth or fifth dwelling was missing. Only a gaping hole remained. This was where a house had been hit directly by a bomb and completely destroyed. Blocks of flats often had their entire fronts sheared away, exposing the rooms—charred and filled with splintered furniture.

We were told that hundreds had been entombed alive when the cellars in which they had sought safety crashed in and they were buried beneath the débris. In one cellar some air still came through a tiny aperture in the rubble to forty or fifty persons who had been entrapped. These still lived, but could not be dug out "because every one had so much to do," as a German informant told us.

"The Poles themselves," he said, "are worse than useless. Our troops at present have no time for such things, so I suppose the unfortunates will die. One can hear their cries and pleas. It is too bad, but that is war!"

For two days six German divisions carried out an intensive storming of the Polish capital. Large numbers of planes rained down bombs. Numerous guns raked the city from one end to the other with high explosives.

We were shown the two main shopping streets, which the Nazis said were principal arteries of communication for the defenders during the latter days of the siege. They were literally nothing more than great mountains of bricks, mortar, and rubbish, with narrow footpaths winding through, as a stream flows down a steep canyon. A few walls still stood

in these avenues, but they merely formed the sides of ugly emptiness from which everything had been hollowed out by bombs and fire.

While several main streets running the length of most of the city were fortified, every crossing, as in Mokotov, was barricaded. Overturned trams, cars, house furniture, and torn-up rails served as defences, reinforced by cobbles from the road and the earth beneath.

The walls beside these barricades were splashed with blackened scars where hand-grenades thrown by Germans had exploded. I noticed that the largest of these barriers always had sally-ports in their sides and one or two machine-gun emplacements. Without exception, wherever a machine-gun had stood direct hits had been scored by light infantry howitzers. These weapons are ideally suited to street-fighting.

The city's main park had been one of the centres of defence. Many Polish batteries had been set up among the trees. Dead horses, their backs and flanks ripped open by shrapnel, dotted the grass.

In one spot the Nazis had assembled captured artillery. I saw dozens of French 75's, hundreds of trench mortars, and other weapons arranged in rows. Heaped piles of rifles and machine-guns surrounded the display.

“This is a small part of the equipment we took from the Poles,” said an officer proudly.

We were shown a battery of 155-millimetre howitzers which had been fired from a clump of trees. One of the howitzers had been totally dismantled by a direct hit. Scraps of uniform, steel from the weapon, and shattered sandbags were all round the wrecked piece. Here and there Polish prisoners were hitching horse carcasses to light trucks and dragging them to a lake near by. In a few days they would all be disposed of, and soon the park would regain its former peacefulness. This was the tone a guide used in explaining the labour of the prisoners. He did not indicate whether he meant that the Poles or horses marred the greenery of the park.

After viewing the wrecked remains of what had been a

pavilion and restaurant we were driven to another main boulevard. Here we left the cars.

As far as I could see thousands of German soldiers were marching and countermarching—leaving detachments along the avenues. These spaced themselves about ten yards apart and stood at attention. On the roofs and at important cross-roads mobile machine-gun units were set up. Round these light weapons Nazi infantry lingered. No civilian was in sight.

The preparations were for the entrance of the Führer into the conquered city. Orders had been issued to prevent civilians from coming within a hundred yards of the route of a gigantic parade soon to take place. Hitler, who was making a surprise visit, was to review parts of the six divisions that had taken the capital.

The soldiers were jubilant, though weary. "We are going to see our Leader!" one private told me, and his face lighted up in anticipation.

An hour later we arrived at the reviewing stand after passing thousands of trudging troops going to their positions along the route. The stand was directly opposite the Belgian Embassy. This building had been hit several times. The Belgian flag, which still hung before the Embassy, had shrapnel-holes torn in its silk.

A few doors down the street was the American Embassy. It appeared untouched from the front; but in the back yard a bomb had fallen, making a crater big enough to bury an army lorry. As we waited thirteen horses were dumped into the crater and the ground levelled off. More could have been buried in the great hole. Apart from shrapnel scars and broken windows the Embassy itself was intact.

In the early days of the siege the Embassy and Consular officials moved to a safer place of refuge. Before the final Nazi effort they were escorted into German-occupied territory.

We stood on the Ujazdowska Aleja, the Piccadilly of Warsaw. On one side was a long string of embassies and consulates, and on the other the big park.

This particular section of the doomed city had been spared as far as possible from Nazi guns and bombs. Even so there

was no building that did not bear some mark of the bombardment.

As we waited both sides of the street filled with German soldiers and S.S. men. They were several ranks deep. All the roofs and windows near the reviewing stand were packed with machine-guns and special field police. The correspondents were the only persons in civilian dress who saw Hitler in Warsaw. His route through the city from the suburbs to the reviewing stand, and afterwards to the airport, was covered by lines of soldiery. No Pole dared come near enough to glimpse the German Leader.

Only parts of the triumphant divisions marched. The rest watched. The effect was peculiar in that, instead of crowds of citizens, the marchers saw only men like themselves, in uniform, from beginning to end.

Down the avenue we heard swelling cheers.

"He is coming!" shouted voices all around us.

As the Führer's *entourage* approached the cheering grew louder and louder. Finally a six-wheeled grey touring car halted in front of the reviewing stand. Beside the driver sat Nazi Number One.

The welcoming roars of the soldiers reverberated in waves of hoarse sound. In the tonneau of the foremost car were S.S. guards armed with machine-guns, their muzzles looming over the head of the Führer. The next two cars bristled with guards and light weapons similar to gangland's tommy-guns. Bringing up the rear were a number of tanks and a motor-cycle squad.

The Führer left the first car, greeting the plaudits of the soldiers with his typical jerky Nazi salute.

One of our chauffeurs thrust his camera into my hands and begged me, as a foreign correspondent and therefore privileged, to get a little closer to Hitler and snap a good pose. The chauffeur, as a soldier, was not allowed to take pictures. I took the camera and walked away from our allotted post, which was about twenty feet beyond the reviewing stand.

I was just in time to get close enough to Hitler to hear the words with which he was greeted by General Walter von Reichenau. As I took several snapshots the monocled general

had come forward from the stand and, stiffly at attention, saluted. The Führer replied with another of his Party gestures—an upraised hand that poised a moment and then jerked to his side.

Von Reichenau, uniform trim and boots sparkling, said, “*Führer ! Ich gebe Warschau !*”

“Führer ! I give you Warsaw !” Shades of Cæsar’s *Commentaries* rose before me !

The two shook hands, and a flood of other generals hurried forward, saluting in a flutter of gloved fingers. The soldiery raised a tremendous shout as their Leader made his way to the pine-branched platform. The S.S. guards left the touring cars and took their prearranged positions on both sides of the stand. Two climbed into a tree behind the platform, their machine-guns ready for any emergency. The cars, tanks, and motor-cycles drove quickly away.

Immediately down the avenue came the mechanical tones of a Nazi divisional band. I returned the chauffeur’s camera. His gratitude was surprising. Later he did me a favour.

Presently the music of the first of the marching divisions passed the reviewing stand, and filed into an open drive just beyond. Here the bandsmen played a stiff, discordant march while their division paraded past the Führer. When the last unit had gone by the band fell in behind and another took its place.

I watched the band leader—he could hardly be called a drum major—as he directed the music.

He held a conductor’s baton in his right hand. It moved in sharp arcs—exactly one and a half feet to the left, and back to the right without the slightest deviation. The music followed suit tonelessly, in that its quality was of the same lack of colour as the abrupt shuttling of the leader’s baton.

The first battalions to pass Hitler were composed of infantry. They goose-stepped in an ardent, clashing rhythm which shook their bodies from head to foot. The steel helmets jumped from chin-straps and banged heavily on the soldiers’ heads each time they smashed a nail-studded boot on the pavement. These were not the smart regiments I had seen changing the guard at the Ehrenmal in Berlin. Rather they

were war-weary troops in patched uniforms, whose faces reflected the efforts of a whirlwind campaign which left little time for sleep or rest.

Throughout the entire parade, which lasted for three hours, Hitler demonstrated one of the reasons why most of Germany adores him. Unceasingly he saluted file after file of grey-clad men. As they clumped past I watched him catch the eye of one or two men in each rank. He would bend his head slightly forward, staring as they passed. I, being just beyond, saw the effect his glances had on the soldiers. The men's faces fairly beamed. They had been singled out by their Führer; and now, quite obviously, they would lay down their lives for their Leader, and no questions asked.

There were many Iron Crosses whose ribbons were shiny and new. The men who wore them were special objects of the Führer's piercing gaze. For them he added a little nod of his head, as if to say, "I knew you'd do it, and I'm still counting on you!" Their faces, as they came past me, were doubly bright. The power the man displayed, even at a distance of twenty yards—from the platform to the marching troops—was amazing. He seemed automatically to instil courage, loyalty, and an immense pride.

As each division passed by its commanding general dismounted from his horse a few yards farther on, and returned to the platform to stand by the Führer. The reviewing stand, when the last contingent had delivered its general to Hitler's side, presented the martial aspect of a Napoleonic painting in modern dress. Steel-helmeted and mostly monocled, the generals grouped themselves about their supreme Leader, their figures stiff as ramrods, their eyes flashing pride.

Occasionally one of the division chiefs would pass a remark to Hitler. But though the Führer answered, he never took his eyes off the soldiers, nor stopped saluting every rank.

Infantry, artillery, signal corps troops, engineers, and machine-gun units had filed by all the afternoon. I wondered at the absence of swarms of tanks—at the very few Air Force men that appeared in the parade. Several companies of light tanks and armoured cars had passed, but few enough in proportion to the rest of the array.

I asked an officer why this was ; he assured me that both mechanized soldiery and Air Force troops had been hurriedly transferred to the West as soon as their tasks had been completed.

After the last battalion had marched away, and its division's band had fallen in behind, the Führer climbed into his staff car, which had followed a short distance behind the last rank.

The soldiers who had witnessed the parade broke up in orderly groups. Nazi Number One sped down the Avenue Ujazdowska Aleja in the opposite direction from the music of the last band.

We walked to our cars. Next on the programme was a meal at the airport, where we were to share the field mess of officers stationed there.

We again drove through the streets of horror, making detours round shell-holes and obstructions. Long lines of hungry Poles stood in straggling bread queues. All were in dirty rags. Faces made the strongest impression on me. The marks of the siege were deeply graven into every one I saw. Some were incredibly filthy, others still bloodstained—and all were utterly dejected.

I saw three people laughing in Warsaw. I saw them all in the space of one block. These three were women. They had gone completely mad. No one paid any attention to them as they wandered aimlessly up and down the bread queues giggling hysterically and slavering.

One strode along the pavement, alternately beating her breasts and howling peals of silly laughter. Joe Grigg was in the same car as I. We both agreed that if we had seen three such maniacs in so short a space of time and distance Warsaw certainly had an extra problem on its hands.

The results of the siege of Warsaw, its terror and suffering, seemed best expressed by a single incident. As our cars stopped to allow a column of lorries to pass I noticed a young boy standing at the kerb.

He was as filthy as a week in a cellar under Nazi bombardment could make any individual. His cheeks were smudged by great gobs of encrusted dirt rivuleted by streams of tears.

His clothes were literally falling off his thin form. He could not have been more than fourteen years old.

Apparently he had just come out of his hiding-place—come out from the horror of blackness into the light of a world from which every crosier his child's mind depended upon had disappeared.

People streamed past him. His condition went totally unnoticed. Suddenly he wrapped both arms about his chest and began sobbing pitifully. He did not cry as a child—rather as a lost soul, eyes wide open, flooded with tears, and great gasping sobs shaking his body. In a final paroxysm he sank to the gutter—where he lay, racking coughs and sighs shaking his small body.

None of the passers-by gave him a second look.

Our car moved on towards the airport.

Away from the centre of the city we saw lines of guards on both sides of the road. Hitler was coming ! No civilians were allowed to approach the sentinelled highways.

The airfield and hangars had been thoroughly blasted by Nazi shells and air attack. The field was overrun with Air Force soldiers and S.S. troops. There was no sign of the Führer. Our buses waited to take us back to Lodz. There was no available place to stay in Warsaw.

General Walter von Brauchitsch stepped from a grey car. Presently we were introduced. Grim, stiff, and the model of a Prussian general, he greeted us curtly. We received a short salute, a semi-courteous nod, and—in answer to our several questions—he walked away to a group of officers.

Presently there was a stir at the entrance to the airport. As we stood in the shadow of a shattered hangar, we heard cries that the Führer had arrived.

The same high-powered staff car rolled into the field with its *entourage* of tanks and motor-cycles trailing behind. First the Führer was driven round the field, evidently to inspect the work of German Pioneers in filling in shell-craters. From the bowels of a partially destroyed hangar Hitler's private aeroplane, the *Grenzmark*, was moved on to a makeshift runway.

As soon as Germany's Leader stepped from his car he was



surrounded by an admiring throng of officers, soldiers, and Air Force mechanics. Peal after peal of cheers echoed round the field. We could not see the Führer because of the dense mass of admiring soldiery that crowded close round him.

Boemer, the Press Chief, gestured to our little group and led us forward—to meet Adolf Hitler !

Pushing through the masses of adoring soldiers, we came face to face with the Führer. As the crowd pressed even closer Boemer began his introductions. Dutch, Japanese, and Italian correspondents met Germany's great man. He shook hands and murmured a greeting to each deep in his throat.

Then he came to Joe and me, the only American correspondents. Boemer introduced us—Joe from the United Press, I from the *Chicago Tribune*. The Führer repeated, "The *Chicago Tribune*?" and seemed to think a moment. Then, under his breath, he added a stream of German which I was unable to catch. As we shook hands, his grip strong and forceful, he mouthed a conventional German greeting. I noted a faint trace of his once thick Bavarian accent.

The man seemed to command a presence of surprising force and dignity. With the memories of what I had just seen in wrecked Warsaw very fresh, the inherent might and power in this ex-wallpaper-hanger loomed to tremendous proportions.

He passed on to the rest of the correspondents, then back to the centre of the group. Fixing his eyes upon me, he made a brief statement. I looked closely at the man. He is slightly under average height ; his face, were it not so well known, could not be considered unusual. His voice, upon that occasion, was quiet and subdued. The fanaticism in his eyes was the most commanding thing about him.

I have seen similar eyes in the heads of those dangerously deranged. I have seen such eyes burning from the faces of mad fanatics, and I have seen similar visual power in great leaders when they step into action. I hesitate to say that his eyes are overawing in the true sense of the word, but they possess a hypnotic quality that can easily persuade his followers to do anything the mind behind the eyes desires.

Looking sharply to the left and right to be certain he had full attention, he said, “ Gentlemen, you have seen for yourselves what criminal folly it was to try to defend this city. The defence collapsed after only two days of intensive effort. I only wish that certain statesmen in other countries who seem to want to turn all Europe into a second Warsaw could have the opportunity to see, as you have, the real meaning of war ! ”

Since then Europe has seen Hitler’s threats in all their awful scope nearly accomplished. Even then it was clear that the Nazi philosophy of conflict was still based upon two principal pillars. The first, to terrify and disrupt civilian populations ; and the second, to crush what armies those populations are able to put into the field. I don’t believe that any of us grasped the full significance behind the Führer’s words on that early day in Warsaw. That they held the poison sword of a terrible prophecy did not seem possible then.

Finished, Hitler saluted us in the Nazi style, released me from the gaze he had never withdrawn during his statement, and turned on his heel for the *Grenzmark* near by. A Spaniard, an Italian, and two Japanese correspondents answered his salute in kind. The rest of us merely nodded. I found myself burning with the injustice of his words.

“ The real meaning of war,” he had said ! Cause meant nothing. Effect was a lesson learned. One man vested with the right of military strength had murdered thousands. Soon the victims would be well over several millions, and probably many more before the final gun was fired—and the last bomb dropped ! Political claims and reasoning seemed the acme of futility before a man who wished every one to accede to his dreams of conquest and threatened universal death and destruction if they chose to differ.

Amid more ringing cheers the Führer climbed into his plane. Shortly afterwards it took off—four powerful engines winging Germany’s destiny back to Berlin.

We filed back into the hangar. In one corner three Polish planes still stood, their fuselage and engines burned and wrecked by Nazi bombs. They had not had a chance even

to leave the ground. A large, gaping hole in the roof bore silent witness to the efficiency of Stuka dive bombers.

A series of tables were arranged in the shape of an L. Officers came in and were seated. We found our places. Food was served from a field kitchen outside.

"Now you will see how the German Army eats on active service," said an officer next to me. First we were given *Kraftbrühe*, a thick, greasy broth popular in the Reich. Then came an indifferent course which tasted like horse-meat. Remembering the horses in the park whose carcasses had lain decaying for days, I did not enjoy what little I ate.

Excitedly several Germans remarked upon the cheese, which came next. There were two varieties, both bad ! But the fact that such delicacies were available to an army in the field was impressed upon us. When asked where the cheese came from one officer smiled. "You must know, of course !" he said. "There was quite a bit of this left when we entered the city !"

"And now ?" I queried.

Smiles faded, and I was the recipient of a dozen unfriendly stares.

Then came the coffee, or so it was called ! I had been used to *Malzkaffee* in Berlin, and it was bad enough ; but the concoction set before us did not even resemble coffee in colour ! Smell and even the faintest trace of taste were wholly absent !

Because this was a State occasion for the Nazi campaigners—they had hoped their Führer would eat with them—every table or so held a small bowl of late autumn flowers.

We had one more stop to make before we returned to Lodz. We were to visit Pilsudski's palace. There was a special reason.

When we arrived and were walking towards the shrapnel-spattered walls an officer called us together and showed us marks of the treads of heavy guns, which he claimed had been placed in the courtyard of the ex-President's mansion. Though all the windows were broken and bits of shell had scarred the walls, no part of the E-shaped structure had been directly hit.

"You see," said the officer, "the Poles had guns here, but we refused to shell this monument where Poland's greatest

man lived. Incidentally," he added, seeing our wonder at the broken windows and splinter-marks, " it will take over four million square yards of glass to replace broken panes in the city proper ! "

We were taken through the building. It has been a national museum since Pilsudski's death. Most of the rooms were in fairly good order. A strong guard paced their beats outside. Ironically the old marshal's office was filled with models of tanks and ultra-modern field-guns. Pilsudski had opposed equipping the Polish Army with sufficient motorized material. He had insisted upon a preponderance of lancer regiments instead of mechanized cavalry. The miniatures, under the circumstances, seemed out of place. I mentioned this to one of the guides.

It struck him as being extremely funny. He waved at the tank models, saying that if the Polish patriot had allowed proper equipment to be distributed to the armies the lightning defeat of Smigly-Rydz's forces would have been neither so swift nor so certain.

" Pilsudski, indeed, was a friend of Germany ! " the guide laughed.

In the buses again we headed back to Lodz. Early twilight fell as we jolted along the roads trying to write our stories. Contrary to some popular conceptions, war correspondents in the field do not carry typewriters, nor have access to them.

As we rumbled along towards Lodz again passing long columns of stricken refugees, I tried to scribble my story on the back of a war map I had brought with me from Berlin. It was a race between me and darkness—an obstacle race in which my pencil darted all over the paper as the wheels of the bus rattled over cobbles and wretched roads.

Beside me, Joe was alternately writing and swearing as his pencil slipped and scribbled over a pocket notebook. Others round us wrote, mumbled, and occasionally glanced out of windows to see how much time they had before darkness.

Finally it became too dark to write. Our stories were done. The buses came to an abrupt halt at a cross-roads.

We were lost. Maps came out, and the drivers left their wheels to confer.

A sinister note crept into the conversation of several officers grouped round a map spread in front of the headlights. Although their talk was guarded we heard them mention *francs-tireurs*—and recalled that, three days before, Polish snipers had ambushed a supply column in this particular spot. The village we stood in was Lowicz, which had been the scene of Nazi shootings in retribution for Polish pot-shots.

The houses around us had been shelled, and presented ghostly skeletons of brick and torn boards. There was no illumination down the long street. No one showed himself. I noticed that two of the officers bending over the map drew their pistols. They kept looking in all directions with revolvers held at their hips. Though guides and officers were about equal in number to civilian-dressed correspondents, *francs-tireurs*, should they attack, would make no differentiation between mufti and S.S. uniforms.

At last the drivers worked out the correct route, and we retraced our way to another crossing and were off again into the night. When we had gone a few miles an officer told me that he had been quite worried. He asserted that the responsibility for the safety of the world Press was not a light one in territory where sniping and ambushes were the order of the day.

“And particularly in Lowicz,” he pointed out, “where more of that sort of thing has gone on than anywhere else in the neighbourhood!”

At the time *francs-tireurs* were very active—even in areas occupied by the Germans in the first few days of the campaign. I heard later that it had been planned that we should arrive in Lodz before nightfall, and for that reason we had not been accompanied by motor-cycle troops or an armoured car. Nothing had happened, but the possibilities left me shivering. The Poles were not gentle with isolated groups of Germans they encountered. Our buses were military grey, and an explanation to the guerrillas would have been worse than useless.

In Lodz we were driven to the Grand Hotel, headquarters

of the Eighth Army—under General Blaskowitz. Immediately we were handed a paper issued by Blaskowitz to his command. Every soldier in the Eighth Army received a similar copy. The proclamation was dated September 19, 1939—before Warsaw had fallen—and was signed Blaskowitz, General of Infantry !

It read :

Soldiers of the Eighth Army ! The ten-day battle of the Bzura has been conducted victoriously. The enemy has been defeated and is rapidly retreating. Through the unusually quick advances from the German border to the different highlands around Lodz you have conducted yourselves gloriously, and with utter bravery against the Poles. You still must push farther west of the Vistula in other battles. You have eliminated any stands of resistance that you have met in new efforts. In the resultant co-operation between you and the Air Force crises have been met and disposed of. Victory through warlike measures is yours ! With the greatest pride I commend your actions. You bear honourably the same number as the famous Eighth Army of Tannenberg ! You have honoured the Führer and your Fatherland ! Soldiers of the Eighth Army ! I am proud of your results. Behind you lie days of greatest efforts ! I have known you to fulfil every claim I have boasted of your prowess. I thank you from the bottom of my heart !

How like the proclamations Napoleon used to deliver to his armies this document is ! Blaskowitz and von Reichenau were the generals whose commands, since the date of the above, had advanced on Warsaw and taken it in record time. The foremost units of their motorized columns were in the suburbs of the Polish capital ten days before it fell. The same type of smashing motorized, mechanized attack that later proved successful in the Netherlands, Belgium, and France had been effected here. And the same process of paralysing deathblows with swarms of tanks was applied in all phases of the western theatre of operations.

As we trooped into the Grand Hotel inner lobby every one's mind was on the same thing—sending our stories as quickly as possible ! Arrangements had been made, but there was only one military line through to Berlin. No central exchange

was available, but a *Nachrichten* telephone van stood outside the hotel. We were told that it was possible that our communications with Berlin might be interrupted while messages of a military nature took precedence.

Grigg dashed on ahead while I hung up my coat. Becoming suspicious, I hurried after him. He stood outside the door of the telephone room, from which lines hung across the courtyard to the van.

"Did you put in your call?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied, smiling. "I'm first on the list. You don't mind, I hope, because, as an agency, the U.P. should have first chance to send the story!"

That's an old gag! Anyone beating the agencies gets fifteen minutes' remembrance from cable editors, and a possible smile in the far future from his publisher—should he recall!

I did mind, but said little. Joe afterwards told me he had met the telephone sergeant in the hall and had asked him to be sure to get the Berlin U.P. number first. I was second. That was small comfort. It might be hours before the second call came through.

Meanwhile the telephone room had filled up with other correspondents. Fifteen trunk-line calls must travel over one wire—some of them going as far as Tokyo and Amsterdam the other way. Furthermore, we were almost certain reception would be poor, and were warned by the sergeant to speak clearly.

The driver who had thrust his camera at me to take the Führer's picture at the parade came in and again thanked me for getting the close-ups of his idol.

"You can do something for me," I said.

He answered that he would be only too willing if it was in his power. It was.

Presently the 'phone rang and the U.P. call came through. Amid the complaints of the rest of the correspondents Joe got off his lead paragraph. He had more than a thousand words to relay to his Berlin office. He got no more than fifty over before he was cut off. Fuming, he asked why the connexion had been severed. My friend of the camera informed him that an important military message had replaced his call.

The soldier was very sorry and suggested that Joe should put in another call, which should come through shortly. It did—an hour and a half later !

Though I was number two on the list, an Italian spoke to Rome and a Japanese to Tokyo before the *Tribune* Bureau in Berlin was on the line. Even so the U.P. had no more than a lead sentence or two, while the *Tribune* beat the agency by nearly an hour on the story. As an impromptu photographer I had collected my just due !

As Joe finally completed his second call an Oberleutnant entered the telephone room. Several privates sat in a corner. One failed to jump up to attention. Joe and I both noticed his actions. Such conduct was unbelievable in the German Army. The officer saw the shortcoming and asked if the man was well. The soldier put his hands to his forehead and leaned forward, whispering that he could not stand. His face was drawn, heavily perspiring, and deathly white. A moment later he fell on the floor and was carried out of the room.

When we asked what the matter was two officers who had suddenly appeared, one a surgeon, asserted that the stricken man's ailment was merely a touch of dysentery. I asked a private a little later what was really wrong with the sick man. The explanation seemed a little too glib for truth, and the appearance of the Army doctor on such short notice suspicious.

A look of fear crossed my informant's face. He mumbled under his breath, "Cholera !"

Neither Joe nor I went near the telephone room the rest of the night. To send the story that I had seen a German soldier overcome by the dread black plague would have been as good as an unwanted exit visa from the Reich. Either would have seen me beyond German frontiers in practically no time at all ! The presence of cholera in the German ranks in Poland never became officially known in Berlin or elsewhere.

I didn't feel very well myself, but regarded this as a mental reaction. A day or so later, back in Berlin, I developed dysentery. But, though this illness is far from pleasant, it still was so preferable to the black death that I almost welcomed



it—as long as it seemed I had to have something ! Finally, with the application of numerous home remedies in great quantities, I recovered.

We were to leave for Berlin early the next morning. I faced another night in the carefully inspired discomfort of the Hotel Metropole !

More bugs ! The same midwinter cold, and the *concierge* pounding at my door before dawn terminated my stay in Lodz. We piled sleepily into buses and bounced out to the airport. Just as the sun rose we took off in the Junkers 52 transport planes that had brought us.

The return trip was uneventful, with the exception of viewing Kutno from the air. The devastation Nazi bombs and artillery had wrought upon this town was amazing. Seemingly no square acre of the ground below us had escaped being shelled or bombed. Kutno possessed an airport as well as a railway terminal. Both had been totally destroyed.

The pilot, to give us a good view, circled twice over the place. The airport was as pock-marked as a Chinese gaming board. In the railway yards the rails had been thrown into grotesque heaps by the intensity of Nazi attacks. Hundreds of goods wagons had been overturned and burned to their iron framework. Locomotives, crushed and thrown twenty yards from the permanent way, lined the tracks. The station itself was nothing more than a vast crater. We should not have known what had stood there had not one of the officers with us pointed out the great hole, saying that it illustrated the splendid marksmanship of Göring's bombers !

## CHAPTER X

### ARRESTED BY THE GESTAPO

AT eleven o'clock on November 9 I sat in the *Chicago Tribune* office in Berlin musing on the dullness of the evening and pounding indifferently on my typewriter.

Adolf Hitler, speaking from the Bürgerbräukeller in Munich on the occasion of the celebration of the Beer Hall Putsch in 1923, had just finished his hour-long address. There had been nothing in it of importance. The wireless was shut off as soon as he had finished. None of us in the office cared to hear the *Sieg Heils* that follow a speech by the Führer, nor the crashing discord of S.A. bands blaring out the *Horst Wessel* song.

The 'phone rang. A voice spoke nervously in furtive tones. It was what we often referred to as "a reliable source."

"There has been an explosion in Munich," the voice informed us, "immediately after the Führer finished his speech!"

We rushed to the wireless-set. It was dead. Hurriedly I put in a call to the Munich police department. Presently it came through, but the police would say nothing other than that they had word that a minor gas explosion had taken place somewhere in the city. Though I begged for details, the other end of the line was adamant and finally hung up curtly.

Other news offices of American papers in Berlin knew no more than we, and later we found out that our call to Munich was the last to go through until morning. All communications with the Bavarian city had been blocked.

Percy Knauth, of the *New York Times*, 'phoned. He was driving down to Munich in his car immediately, and wanted to know if I'd like to come along. For baggage I grabbed a rusty razor, which was pushed away in the back of a desk drawer, and rushed out of the office.

Miss Schultz's last words were, "If you can't file from the city jump over to Switzerland! I believe it's a big story!"

Percy and I drained all the petrol out of Mubsi, and managed to get another ten gallons from the garage-man. We were soon out of Berlin and rolling along the Reichsautobahn to the south. We talked of this and that, remarking that we hadn't seen a car for miles.

Then Percy half whispered, "Say, Jack, what if they've killed him?"

I didn't answer. The possibility was too tremendous. I knew that we should be on the scene first, might have hours of exclusive time before other correspondents arrived. A scoop on Hitler's death! Wow!

As we drove through the Thuringian Forest the distant thunder of guns sounded above the hum of the engine. Anti-aircraft batteries were practising not far off, and the sky was split again and again with sharp stabs of flame. Searchlight beams swept across the night. The setting fitted our moods. Violence and the noises of war . . . with Hitler a few hours away, perhaps on a swastika'd bier!

In Munich at six in the morning we drove immediately to Ernie Pope's flat. Pope had been in Munich for years, and had been back from his brief sojourn in Berlin only a few weeks. However, he'd know the real truth of our 'biggest' story—could set us right.

Labouring under the delusion that Hitler had been killed, we banged on Pope's door. Admittedly it was wishful thinking, but the possibilities of such a scoop had loomed to heights; we were certain the explosion had done away with Nazi Number One!

Ernie came to the door, rubbing his eyes and pulling his dressing-gown around him.

"What's up?" he asked, through mists of sleep.

"My God!" I shouted. "Don't you know that Hitler may be dead?"

Ernie woke up.

"I knew something was screwy around this town," he said, as he began reaching for clothes. "I filed a piece last night on the sudden let-up of the blackout and rumours that peace had been declared!"

He had heard vaguely of an explosion, but has not con-

nected it with the Bürgerbräukeller speech. The police had quickly suppressed outgoing news of the incident. Ernie was in Munich ; yet he knew no more than the fact that the blackout had been eliminated for a few hours, and that the police became doubly vigilant. The explosion story had been so minimized that he had been led to believe that the occurrence was an ordinary one and had no political significance.

Munich seemed normal, except that a cordon of police surrounded the Bürgerbräukeller and a great pile of debris was stacked in the yard at the side of the building.

Officials knew nothing. There was no information for the Press. Hitler had left the hall nine minutes before the explosion, and all hell was about to break loose—this the American Consul told us. Funerals of those who had been killed were to take place at the Feldherrnhalle, scene of the 1923 Beer Putsch.

We decided that one of us should cover the funerals, and the other two the results of the explosion. We hoped to get some information, and a colour story of the appearance of the wrecked building.

We decided to toss a coin to see which one of us should cover the two stories. At that time, and all the rest of the day, we were the only foreign newspapermen in Munich. The coin spun in the air, was slapped on the back of Ernie's hand, and Percy won. He chose the Feldherrnhalle ceremonies. At the time I was certain I had the worst of the bargain.

Ernie and I set out for the Bürgerbräukeller in his car. The street in front of the famous beer hall was jammed with curiosity-seekers and police.

"Come on, Ernie," I said, "let's try to get into the damn' place."

"We haven't a prayer," he asserted. "I know how they are about these things."

"Well, let's try anyway," I insisted.

I thought it was funny then that he didn't want to attempt to see the damage at close quarters, but I didn't know the whole story at that moment. Ernie is a good newspaperman,

knows the value of an opportunity. It seemed strange that he hung back. But this was his home ground. Upon more persuasion he agreed to make a try at getting inside the bombed room.

We went to the entrance. The policeman on duty there stated that the Press positively could not be admitted. We showed our identification and Press passes from the Ministry of Propaganda and the Nazi Foreign Office. The policeman was not impressed. After some argument he grudgingly said he would present our request to the Gestapo authorities, who had taken charge of the premises.

We waited in the entrance-hall, and again Ernie expressed the opinion that he didn't think we ought to force matters. We could go to the Gestapo Press Bureau and there get permission to enter. Otherwise he believed there was no chance. I knew Nazi Press bureaus. A visit to the Gestapo news office would take hours. Meanwhile some other correspondent would blow into town and steal our 'exclusive.'

Fifteen minutes went by while we argued. Finally the policeman returned and said it was impossible for us to see the fatal room, as it was thought that there might be other bombs hidden in the building.

I asked if I could speak to the man in charge, and the policeman assured us that this could not be arranged.

As we walked away Ernie sighed in relief.

"Let's go down to the police-station and get permission," I suggested.

"I suppose we really must make every effort, must we?" he answered.

Again I wondered at his reluctance to come into contact with the officials in charge.

As we were about to climb into the car some one hailed us. A little man with scars all over his face, accompanied by a uniformed policeman, was beckoning frantically. We waited, and when he came up to us, slightly out of breath, he asked politely if we were journalists and if we would like to see the scene of the explosion.

Naturally I said we would; so, flanked by the uniformed policeman on one side and the little scarred man on the

other, Ernie and I again entered the entrance-hall of the building.

This time we got a little farther. At the end of the hall—a few feet from the door to the main room, where the explosion had occurred—we were told to wait. Two other guards in plain clothes, both burly and taciturn, replaced our original escorts.

We asked questions, but received only harsh grunts for answers. Ernie said he did not like the look of things.

"Hell, Ernie," I argued, "it's only natural that they are taking every precaution, and these chaps probably have to be on duty here anyway!"

"I still don't like it," he replied, "and, frankly, I'm plenty worried. These fellows certainly have the wind up, and the American Consul has no idea where we are or what we intended to do this afternoon."

We stood for half an hour while streams of bemedalled officials stamped through the hall after viewing the wreckage inside. Finally our scar-faced friend returned and asked for our passports, saying that he would bring them back immediately. Reluctantly we gave them up.

His attitude was obvious. If we had refused he intended to take them from us. The guards edged closer when he asked, and gave every evidence that they would like nothing better than a little rough stuff.

Our precious passports out of our hands, Scarface left us with a grim warning. "It is not advisable here to speak English," he said with a frown—and was seconded by grim nods from the other two men, whom we now regarded as our captors.

Scarface disappeared, and I told the guards that Ernie and I had decided that we didn't wish to see the room in which the explosion had happened, and now preferred to leave.

"Could we have our passports back?" I asked.

We got only a curt answer and more deeply suspicious looks.

"*Nein!*" was the sole answer the guards would give us.

Ernie had been in Munich for five years as a correspondent, but this was his first few months working for an American

newspaper. Another half-hour went by without Scarface, permission either to leave or to view the scene, or any change in our apparent status. Each new group of high Nazis who passed through the hall stared at us with frank animosity.

Gauleiter Wagner came into the passage accompanied by Julius Streicher, the Jew-baiter, and a Major Eberstein, S.S. chief of the district. The Gauleiter halted in front of us. Our guards clicked their heels sharply and swept their hats off their heads in a single jerky movement. Streicher and Eberstein moved closer to the Gauleiter, the former pulling his chin as he stared at us, and Eberstein slipping his dagger a few inches in and out of its sheath.

"What are you doing here, Mr Pope?" demanded Wagner in a loud voice. Without waiting for an answer he said sharply, "You know, of course, we are at war with England! For five years, Mr Pope, you have been the representative of the London *Daily Express* and Reuters here in Munich! I cannot understand how you happen to be here, or what your motives may be."

Ernie turned white. My knees began to knock together, and his earlier reluctance to 'crash in' was clear. He explained to the Gauleiter that he now represented the *Chicago Tribune* and that all affiliations with the British paper and news agency had been severed at the beginning of the war.

The expression on all three faces before us plainly was that of disbelief. Turning to me, Wagner abruptly asked why I was present. My indifferent German and obvious English accent did not help matters. Already the German Government was circulating the story that the explosion was the work of the British Secret Service. This story was about in Munich an hour after the explosion had happened.

As Ernie attempted to explain his present situation and employment Wagner, Streicher, and Eberstein turned on their booted heels and strode away, their *entourage* leaving us with black looks on every face.

In a few minutes Scarface reappeared and asked for all our papers. We questioned him as to what the delay was, and if we could go. It was so late now, we affirmed, that we must hurry to a 'phone to get our stories to America in time

for the early editions. This is not true, as cables were often sent as late as two o'clock in the morning, making the deadline easily.

He waved our explanation aside, saying, "Everything will be all right shortly, but you know how these things are. They take lots of time."

Suddenly I realized what I had in an inside pocket. It was a story I had kept, expecting a query from Chicago. The nature of the story was military and contained many technical figures and data on artillery of the German Army. If we were to be searched I had little doubt that the Gestapo would regard the cable as damning evidence that I was a spy.

I whispered this to Ernie, and he gave me in return another piece of disquieting information.

"I haven't paid my taxes here in Germany for more than six years," he revealed, "and I understand they are awfully tough about that sort of thing now. Seeing Wagner didn't help any either. Of course, he recognized me and was probably sure we both had a hand in the bombing!"

Another thirty minutes went by. We had been standing in the entrance-hall for about two hours. The guards refused to talk to us or answer any questions whatsoever. Red Cross workers and *Arbeitsdienst* soldiers passed through the hall continually. More S.S. and police gathered along the corridor in little groups.

Major Eberstein suddenly came out of the door to the main room and bellowed, "*Achtung!*" Having every one's attention, he barked out a short order. "Arrest every one who is outside in the street!"

The S.S. and police left at the double. Ernie and I looked dismally at each other.

Another half-hour passed, and by this time we were certain we were prisoners.

Scarface had all the identification we possessed, and, further, had kept it for more than an hour and a half. He returned, still polite, and said that we should have to come with him to the Wittelsbacherpalast, the Gestapo headquarters in Munich, to be "identified."

We left the hall with Scarface leading and the two guards



bringing up the rear. It would be convenient if we would take Scarface down to headquarters in Ernie's car. Our one ray of hope was his polite attitude. But, then, that might not mean anything as soon as we were incarcerated for questioning.

When we arrived at the Wittelsbacherpalast Scarface announced to the guard that we were "with him." We climbed three dismal flights of stairs. The Palast, the old home of the Bavarian kings, was constructed in the heavy, high-ceilinged, and formal architectural mode made popular centuries ago.

Never have I seen another interior so depressing. The room we eventually arrived at was little cheerier. It was filled with clicking typewriters and crowds of frightened people, who had been brought in on suspicion. There must have been at least sixty prisoners in the room. Hopelessness was obvious in every weary face.

Occasionally several would be separated from the general group and taken downstairs—to the cellars!

What happened in the cellars of the Wittelsbacherpalast was common knowledge. For several years the old building had been Gestapo headquarters. All Munich whispered tales of Nazi brutality in the dank underground passages beneath the place, the former torture chambers of the Bavarian monarchs.

We waited forty minutes, standing first on one foot and then on the other, with Scarface at our side, now grim, no longer polite, and somewhat proud of his arrests.

He had a prize—two Americans, one of whom had been a correspondent for London newspapers. Obviously he believed that we had something to do with the attempted assassination of Hitler. With no passports and our papers gone, we waited to be 'identified.' The military story burned in my pocket. Ernie's taxes—unpaid—did not improve his view of the situation.

Finally Scarface received a 'phone call at the desk by his side and waved us to another room. Here we were seated in a corner. Little light came through the dirty windows, and the ancient panelling seemed to lean over as if to engulf

us. Three inquisitors pulled straight-backed chairs opposite our seats and began to ask us questions.

Who were we? Why . . . and what were we doing in Munich? came from all of them at once.

"There is a report that you, Mr Pope, are an English spy. What do you say to that?" demanded a beetle-browed Gestapo detective.

Before Ernie could answer another stated that it was believed he was sending reports to the British Secret Service *via* America.

"You, Mr Raleigh, have been under suspicion for some time!" Scarface said, as he filed his nails.

I stumbled over an answer, assuring them that such an idea was ridiculous and that I had been sent to Munich only to get the story of what actually happened in the Bürgerbräukeller. Was it not natural that I should try to see the scene of the explosion? Didn't they realize that America would be interested in all details?

Nobody was impressed.

Ernie began a long dissertation on what he had done in Munich as a correspondent, and something of his personal history. The trio listened. Scarface stood in the background, still busy with his file. I could see he was proud of himself; he certainly would not do anything to minimize the importance of his arrests, which very likely, in his opinion, would throw considerable light on what had happened.

Ernie rattled on. In the middle of a sentence one of our questioners pulled his chair a little closer and remarked, "Mr Pope, your German is excellent. I do not doubt you have found it a big asset!"

"Yes," said Ernie, "I have found it helpful. My father teaches German at an American university; and all my family speak several languages regularly, so that we do not lose contact with a foreign tongue—we enjoy speaking German in particular!"

"Hmm!" was all the answer he received.

If our situation had not appeared so precarious I should have laughed. Such a comment from Ernie was about as apt as his greeting anyone with the phrase "*Heil Hitler!*"

I didn't blame him, and was ready to acquiesce in almost any statement if we only could get out of the place.

The possibility of a personal search kept recurring to me. Considering the conditions under which we were being held, a trip to the cellar seemed very likely. I remembered Phil Tucker's experience in Berlin, when he had been picked up with a large number of other persons as a Communist agitator in 1935. He was passing a group in the street that was regarded with suspicion. Though Phil had nothing to do with the others apprehended—was only caught walking through their ranks on his way to work—he was taken to the Alexanderplatz as a suspect. When he arrived he and the others were taken to the basement and told to stand facing the wall of a long corridor. If anyone said anything or turned his head he received a smart blow in the small of the back from a rubber truncheon.

Eventually Phil was freed, and proper apologies were made for his imprisonment and inconvenience. I pictured Ernie and me standing along a corridor in the cellars of the Wittelsbacherpalast. Beside us would be the white, frightened faces of others who had been arrested. As more questions were fired at us I anticipated the truncheon and the hopelessness of our situation if we were not 'identified' or soon released.

What discoveries our captors would unearth when they found my military story and checked up on Ernie's taxes!

A 'phone on the desk behind our three questioners rang. In rapid German Scarface related the conditions under which we had been arrested, and asked what should be done.

The call was from Berlin, either the Foreign Office or the Ministry of Propaganda. We were 'identified.'

Before returning our passports and papers the three Gestapo agents and Scarface carefully made notes. The French and British visas on my passport fell under particular scrutiny. They had been issued before the war, but still were exceedingly interesting to our four friends.

Reluctantly Scarface returned our passports and Press passes.

"You must take me back to the Bürgerbräukeller in your car," snapped Scarface.

He was disappointed in our innocence. As we walked through the outer office dozens of new suspects were huddling together in front of squat, brutal detectives. We went out of the office followed by several of the prisoners, led by other detectives. They were on their way to the cellar, and their pale faces blanched with fear.

As we reached the ground floor Scarface led us to the open courtyard, but the others turned in another direction down some narrow stairs. Over my shoulder I heard one or two quiet groans. Later we were informed that more than one person died in the cellars that day.

On our way back, squeezed in Ernie's two-seater, Scarface opened out a little. He told us the details of the explosion and its aftermath which eventually appeared in the *Tribune* as 'exclusive.'

Seven or eight had been killed, he asserted, and more than seventy wounded. There still was great danger of the roof falling in, and the bombed central room where Hitler had spoken was a ghastly mess of blood, torn flesh, and wreckage.

He had no explanation to offer for Hitler's decision to leave immediately after he had finished speaking. This was not the Führer's usual custom. In other years he had always stayed on after his address to drink beer and talk with the "Old Fighters" of the party.

Christian Weber, leader of the "Old Fighters," and Rudolph Hess were not suspected of instigating the outrage, he claimed, but their insistence that the beer hall should not be searched previous to Hitler's arrival was responsible for the explosion.

Whenever the Führer appeared publicly a very thorough search of the premises where he spoke was made by the secret police. Here in Munich the "Old Fighters" refused to have their loyalty questioned, and regarded the inspection of the Bürgerbräukeller as a slur upon their status in the party. Otherwise the bomb surely would have been discovered and the occurrence never would have happened.

Scarface didn't know what might occur as a result, but

assured us that even more care would be taken of the person of the Führer in the future. Himmler, chief of the Gestapo, the S.S., and the rest of the police in Germany would not allow this opportunity to slip. New laws might be passed giving the Gestapo even more power. So thought Scarface. Later even more power was relegated to the secret police upon Himmler's pressure on Hitler under the guise of protecting Nazi Number One.

When we got back to the Bürgerbräukeller the streets near it had been roped off, and only the police were to be seen. The crowds had been excluded from the spectacle of the removal of bodies still being found in the ruins of the room. Several had been buried under eight to ten feet of debris.

Scarface said good-bye, wishing us both his best regards and vaguely apologizing for holding us. Lastly, he said, it was still impossible to see the interior of the beer hall.

We drove to Ernie's house, where we met Percy Knauth, who had covered the ceremonies at the Feldherrnhalle. Goebbels and Hess had been there and made short addresses, but nothing unusual had happened. We told Percy of our experience.

Percy suggested that we should go to the flat of a friend, an American girl, who was engaged to another correspondent in Berlin. We could 'phone from there, and that afternoon she had seen Unity Mitford, who was in hospital. In exchange for details of the explosion at the Bürgerbräukeller and our 'arrest story,' Percy agreed to give us what his friend had got from Miss Mitford for the *New York Times*.

Just before we left Ernie's flat he received a call from what he knew to be a very reliable source. He did not name the informant, but stated that the person on the other end of the wire was some one in the Italian Consulate in Munich.

According to this source—and sufficient proof was given to convince both of us—the Gestapo had been extremely active in Munich before the explosion.

Three days before the disaster a Catholic church in Munich, holding a Novena service, had been surrounded by secret and uniformed police. In the middle of the service the

Gestapo burst in and arrested the entire congregation, including the priests. Every one was shoved into waiting patrol vans and sent to a concentration camp. No reason was given for this act, except that the Gestapo had information that certain quarters were planning an attempt on Hitler's life when he appeared at the Bürgerbräukeller.

Cardinal Faulhaber, Catholic leader in Munich and friend of the Monarchists, was very ill and confined to his estate outside the city. Many believed that the arrest of the Catholic congregation was the signal for a general pogrom against the Catholics. A year before in Berlin, almost to the day, a large Jewish pogrom had taken place.

The Italian told Ernie that, to him, it was obvious that the beer hall explosion was an inside job, and asked who would be likely to benefit. Also it looked very funny that Hitler had left the hall so abruptly, contrary to his usual custom. This story Ernie and I kept to ourselves, but determined to get it out in some way or another.

It seemed to confirm that the British secret police guilt, as claimed by the Nazis, was a convenient fabrication. Further, it appeared that the arrest of the Catholics was effected to provide an alibi if needed.

When we arrived at Percy's friend's house another guest was there. He was a member of the German Air Force who spoke perfect English, having lived in the United States for many years. He said he had worked for the Standard Oil Company, and had returned to Germany in their service. When the war broke out he volunteered immediately. He was not a pilot, but was a member of the Engineer Section of the Air Force.

His specific job was to supervise the building of underground oil reserves and hangars.

Although he was very pleasant, the reason for his appearance seemed, to me, obvious. Neither Ernie nor I had a great deal to say while he was there. After he left I wrote my story and made a call to Berlin, communication having been reopened with the German capital since that morning.

I realized that it was a possibility that every word of my conversation would be recorded in Gestapo headquarters.

Still, I must somehow tell Miss Schultz about the arrests of the church congregation that had come from Ernie's Italian source. But first I should have to indicate to her that it would be wise for me to slip across the Swiss border and 'phone the story through to the *Chicago Tribune's* Paris office. She must understand that I had something hot which could not be sent over German-controlled wires.

After a long wait, during which I heard several suspicious clicks, the connexion with Berlin was completed. I dictated my story to Miss Schultz.

When the piece was finished—on her typewriter ready to be 'phoned to Amsterdam for cable relay—I faced the problem of how to hint to my chief that I had another story that could not be given to her, but might be filed through near-by Switzerland.

"Would you like to have some coffee?" I asked.

It was the only approach I could think of at the moment. I judged that she, knowing that the only place where I might get real coffee would be Switzerland, would understand the double meaning.

"What," she demanded, "are you talking about?"

"Well, I think I might be able to bring some good coffee back if I went to Switzerland. . . . The coffee is very good there! I'm sure you'd enjoy it!" I continued along the same lines, adding emphasis in the hope that she would get the idea.

"I can see no reason for you to go to Switzerland, unless there is a good story there and we are uncovered," she stated.

"But the coffee is excellent in Switzerland!" I frantically insisted.

"It's much better that you stay in Munich for the time being. And what is this business about coffee?" she repeated.

Dismally I told her to forget it. Later, in Berlin, she told me that she had been disturbed about the idea of going to Switzerland for coffee. Too late she realized that I was trying to tell her something.

The presence of the Nazi Air Force man as well as our experiences that day led me to believe that the line might be tapped. I felt it unwise to mention anything about the church

arrests. Besides, the memories of the Wittelsbacherpalast were still fresh !

Early in December a Gestapo friend of mine told me that he had had the pleasure of listening to the record of my 'phone conversation from Munich to Berlin the night after the explosion. He was very curious about the coffee angle. "You know," he remarked, "we have been wondering what the devil you meant for a long time !"

I did not offer an answer, but simply said that both Miss Schultz and I loved a decent cup of coffee, and my being near the Swiss border seemed a good excuse to get some.

The American girl who had been to see Unity Mitford that afternoon reported that Unity greeted her as an old friend, though they had never met before. The girl had gained entrance into the hospital with ease, and had been granted an interview without trouble. Miss Mitford conducted herself towards her interviewer as if she were a bosom friend.

On the way back to my hotel I walked through the most complete blackout I have ever witnessed, though Berlin and other towns in Germany have been, and are, exceedingly thorough in their precautions.

The only persons I saw in the dark streets were squads of police and S.S. soldiers. Crossing a park in the centre of town, I fell into an air raid trench. It had been raining and the bottom of the trench was muddy. After cursing my accident in much more than a whisper, I finally reached the hotel lobby. Here I ran into Ringsted, a correspondent of the Danish newspaper *Politiken*. He was aghast at my appearance—mud caked all over me, and water oozing out of my shoes !

"We heard in Berlin that American correspondents had been arrested and shot ! Have you just come from the Gestapo ?" he shouted.

I explained what had happened.

Together we made several trips into the blackness that night. We saw no one except the constantly increasing police patrols and an occasional green Gestapo van hurrying to the Wittelsbacherpalast with its cargo of unfortunate suspects.



Wild rumours were still going the rounds, but one thing was assured—that Hitler had escaped injuries in the explosion. All important Party leaders also had left the Bürgerbräukeller just before the catastrophe. This was contrary to the general custom upon such annual meetings. The Führer and his aides had made it a practice each year upon the anniversary of the Beer Hall Putsch to sit over steins and talk with the "Old Fighters" for an hour or two after the speech. As Ringsted cheerfully agreed, "Something is rotten in Denmark!"

There have been numerous theories advanced about the explosion. The Nazis claimed it was the work of British secret agents. The Allies asserted that it proved high dissension in the Party, that an actual attempt was made on Hitler's life by jealous subordinates. One likely version claims that the whole affair was engineered by persons within the Party to force immediate invasion of the Lowlands, beginning the second large-scale Blitzkrieg. England was to be blamed, and instant action demanded of the High Command staff. This followed, well publicized by Goebbels' puppet Press; but if this was the real reason behind the explosion it failed to move Germany's generals at that time.

Munich was a seething broil of suspicion. This atmosphere was clearly evident to Ringsted and myself when we went out to eat at the Regent Palace Hotel. The restaurant was closed. We were forced to eat in the night club on the premises.

The orchestra played. A few couples danced lethargically. Most of the people—and the room was crowded—sat at their tables talking in low whispers.

Army officers and S.S. men assumed a truculent manner. They glared at every one impartially.

We spoke in English, which Ringsted knew better than I did German. The waiter and a table of S.S. men near by frowned ominously when they heard us speaking the language of their enemy.

The S.S. men had had too much to drink. They went into a sudden huddle, and two of their number swaggered over to our table.

"Why do you speak English?" one of them demanded.

The orchestra stopped playing in the middle of a piece. The entire room focused eyes on us. Quietly Ringsted and I explained who we were.

The two grey uniforms swaying at the table showed disbelief.

We showed our passports as a crowd of people began closing in on our table. After a minute our interrogators were satisfied. The head waiter pushed through the onlookers and asked that we should leave. He said that he did not feel that he could subject his guests to the discomfort the English language gave them under the circumstances.

The Regent Palace was directly across the street from my hotel. The park lies between. That I again stumbled into the air raid trench on the way did not improve my temper.

## CHAPTER XI

### EYE-WITNESS BRUTALITY

*I*T was on October 5, 1939, that I was shown Warsaw. This was immediately after the surrender of the Polish capital. What I saw, as related in a previous chapter, was so terrible that it led a German officer who had seen four years of fighting during the last war to remark that never had he observed such awful destruction.

"Towns and villages in Flanders," he said, "were, of course, demolished to piles of brick dust. But in all modern times no city has ever been subjected to the intensity of firepower that Warsaw has received."

Though the Oberleutnant was inured to the most harrowing sights, he was completely shaken by the appearance of the stricken city.

For two days the artillery of six divisions had poured high explosives on Warsaw. Concentrated air attacks swooped down, dropping hundreds of incendiary and high-explosive bombs.

Only the sweeping hand of a tremendous earthquake could have equalled the extent of the damage. I saw no building that had escaped the ravages of bombardment and air raids. Hundreds were pitted by exploding hand-grenades or sprayed by thousands of machine-gun bullets. More than a million square feet of window-panes had been broken.

Every street had been barricaded, and tank-traps had been built at all crossings. Overturned vehicles had served as impromptu ramparts. Gaping holes were torn out of avenues by giant shells. Houses were charred by fire, and few were without great, yawning openings in their sides where heavy artillery had scored direct hits.

More terrifying than this setting of destruction were the faces of the people, as I still remembered them. Some walked aimlessly about, their eyes streaming tears. No one paid any

attention. More stumbled round in a daze, their bandages encrusted with dirt and dried blood. Several I saw obviously had gone completely crazy, and laughed hysterically at nothing, waving their arms feebly, or suddenly stopped their mad peals to stare.

Grey-clad soldiers and field police were everywhere mounting machine-guns, shoving people along roughly, and unslinging their rifles whenever more than three persons talked together.

It was cold, and already long lines of miserable humans had formed in bread queues. Dead horses were strewn everywhere. The stench of the city was overwhelming. In piles of rubbish that had been houses I frequently saw a protruding arm or leg. Children wandered about crying for their mothers. Misery incarnate threw a pall over everything. All this I have already briefly described in an earlier chapter.

A Nazi Party man in our escort said calmly after the tour, "This is the best thing that ever happened to Poland. Now she will become civilized, guided by efficient German methods! That it had to be done this way is . . . ah, unfortunate!"

Warsaw has gradually cleared away the dead horses, effecting a few repairs on the wrecked buildings, making the bread queue function very competently, and getting the blessings of Nazi-ism in big doses! The people don't cry any more in the streets. So many tears have been shed that there are few left.

The Schutzstaffel, or S.S., has replaced the Army.

Propaganda is the order of the day, and, as an official in Berlin stated, "a few Poles in the city are beginning to see the light and are saying 'Heil Hitler!'"

Warsaw is still a city of ghosts, with 40 per cent. of the buildings ruined or damaged beyond repair. Beneath the piles of brick and rubble are hundreds of bodies. These threaten pestilence. Because of this, perhaps, Warsaw is the most healthful place in which to live in Poland. This is true only because the Germans fear cholera. There have been outbursts of the dread black plague from time to time, but the

Nazis have managed to suppress a general epidemic. Typhus continues to rage in certain parts of the Polish capital.

During the siege Germans were particularly careful not to destroy the waterworks. Bombing-planes avoided this objective with the greatest care.

Fear of cholera has spurred the invaders to phenomenal preventive efforts. As a result there have been only abortive outbreaks of the disease.

The S.S. and the Gestapo are active day and night. Suspicion rests on every one. Firing-squads work endlessly. Each day brings fresh decrees of misery. Being wholly Nazi, the S.S. overdoes whatever it attempts. Mass executions are common. Practices that are the very essence of cruelty abound in courts, prisons, and concentration camps! A breath of suspicion cast on anyone marks him for immediate imprisonment, torture, or death.

Early in February the Nazis in Warsaw ran out of boots. None could be sent from the Reich. Notices were posted at principal street corners and squares. They demanded that all boots in good condition must be given up to the police at once! Anyone failing to comply with the order and found wearing good boots would be shot on sight!

Winter had descended on Poland. It was the most severe in many years. Poles faced the problem of giving up their boots or standing before a dozen rifles. If they failed to heed the order they must remain indoors out of sight. Then they were not safe, for search parties ransacked homes in all parts of the city. If decent boots were found their owner paid the supreme penalty for ignoring the law.

Polish ex-officers who commanded units during the campaign are meeting fresh perils. They are required to register with the S.S. If they do not the alternative is death.

The Nazis procured the names and units of most Polish soldiers. It was simple. All records were still in Warsaw. If an ex-soldier offender is caught and sentenced to death his commanding officer meets the same fate. Though the officer may not have seen the man who caused his sentence since early days of battle on the Bzura or the Vistula, he is held directly responsible.

Some officers registered. Some did not. Many were apprehended for their "negligence" and died against a brick wall. Others who felt registering to be the best policy fell alongside captured men who had been mere faces in the rear rank of their company.

Through February and March the food situation grew worse. Poles stood in queues for hours in the bitter cold. When the National Socialist Volunteer Welfare Organization, or N.S.V., had been in Poland stew was an occasional dish. Now all that the queues received was bread. Fats, the staple of Polish diet, had disappeared. Even the Germans felt the pinch, though what fats were to be had were in their larders.

One woman who ran a beauty shop in Warsaw had stocked before the war with a large consignment of beauty preparations. Day after day in desperation she ate cold cream. It kept her alive.

The intense weather bit into the marrow of freezing bones. The people began breaking up furniture and pulling laths from the walls for firewood. Coal could be had—at about twenty pounds a ton!

When beds, chairs, and tables were gone and walls could no longer keep out the wind because their laths had been burned, the people flocked to the theatres and cafés. They did not go because they wanted to submit their every word to Gestapo listeners, whose favourite hunting-grounds are cinemas and restaurants. They went because these places were warm.

In Bromberg German cruelty was openly displayed before the eyes of a dozen correspondents. Both an Army field policeman and a strapping S.S. man were clearing crowds of children away from a convoy of staff cars which had taken us through the Corridor.

The S.S. man waved his rifle menacingly at the Polish youngsters who stood staring at the "foreigners." The field policeman shouted gruffly, "Move on!" Already having had a taste of Nazi discipline, the children obediently turned on their heels and began walking away. None remained nor showed the smallest symptom of ignoring the command. Yet their passivity seemed to inflame the S.S. man.

He rushed at the retreating back of one eleven-year-old girl and gave her a shove that nearly sent her spinning.

She never turned her head.

Then the brave, grey-uniformed bully stepped forward, his gun suddenly slung over his left shoulder, and his right hand swinging in a brutal arc.

The girl's hat flew off her head and she fell, stunned by the blow from behind. He jabbered something to her in German which she apparently did not understand. Then mists cleared and she retrieved her hat and crawled quickly away—just in time to avoid the hobnail boot that was drawn back in preparation for a final dose of Nazi "protection"!

Several of the correspondents present almost got into serious trouble, but the wise restraints of a Czech and two Dutchmen in the party prevented a natural reaction.

Complaining bitterly, I asked why such brutality was permitted. Our escorts hastened to explain that such happenings were extremely rare, and that the little girl must have been something of a pest or she never would have been so treated!

"You know," said one officer, "these people do not understand easily. They are inferior and do not learn quickly. I am sorry you were subjected to the incident. It is really nothing—nothing at all. Please don't let it disturb you."

Later I talked with a Bromberg Pole who had been in America. He smiled a little when I told him what I had seen. It was in Bromberg that many 'blood baths' had taken place in revenge for Polish reaction to German minorities before the city was taken.

"So now they are doing it openly, for the eyes of all the world to see! Perhaps the little girl has done Poland a favour," commented my friend.

Then he asked what I thought went on behind closed doors if such flagrant action was allowed in plain view of the world Press. Details of his explanation of what did go on behind closed doors is hardly printable here.

"For the present," he concluded, "we must accept everything. But should Germany ever begin slipping, or things go badly with her in the war, there are thousands in Poland

who will have a score to settle. The Nazis are cruel, but the revenge of a Pole is not a pretty thing to see. We believe in Poland, and there have been other invaders here. . . . They have never forgotten us ! ”

There is an old brewery in Kulmsee that has not been in use for seven or eight years. In accordance with European customs a large network of cellars and tunnels spread for hundreds of feet underneath the structure. When beer was being made casks were stored in underground passages—which necessarily are from six to fifteen feet beneath the surface of the earth. Thereby refrigeration was effected. The atmosphere in the tunnels is dank and cold. A few chinks admit thin streams of light every twenty feet.

Five hundred families are living in the Kulmsee brewery tunnels. They have erected wood partitions, and most see only by the light of a candle. Some forgo even this illumination and grope eternally between bed and stove in the darkness.

Tuberculosis is fast developing among the inmates of this Dante's Inferno who have not already contracted it. Other diseases are sickeningly obvious.

A pallor of death is seen on every face that exists in the black labyrinth. The people there cannot move elsewhere. There is no room. The German authorities of the town told correspondents that provision would eventually be made for other housing, but that in the meantime, though they deplored the situation, nothing could be done. That was in November.

Several people living in the tunnels told me that they had recently moved in when the danger of air raids became a reality. Some few families had been there, they said, before the war, but numerous others flocked to the safety of the cellars when Nazi aircraft were a definite menace.

Their homes, they explained, had been turned into quarters for the S.S. and the troops. They believed that there was little or no chance of regaining their dwellings, and were pretty sure that Germany would spend no money on rehousing projects. It was either remain in the tunnels or freeze to death sleeping in the fields.



Finally they sadly stated that for them there was a minimum of hope. Dozens were dying every week, and the fear of cholera shadowed each day and night that passed.

My Nazi escort insisted that each inhabitant of the hellish burrows was unemployed because he was too lazy to work, and that the beet sugar factory into which the brewery was converted after the making of beer was discontinued had to close down because the workers of Kulmsee would rather sit at home and nearly starve than bend a back to hard work.

A minute or so after he had said this we came to a partition that was locked. The police and S.S. conducting the tour pushed indiscriminately into the privacy of the people living in the tunnel. My guide banged on the door with his lantern. He got no answer. Shining the beam of his pocket torch into cracks in the boards, he detected something. Loudly he demanded that the door be opened, or he would break it in.

Finally some one inside fumbled with the lock, and then said in a small voice that it could not be opened as it was locked from the outside. This proved to be true on second examination. The door was opened, and by the light of the torch and lantern we saw two little children cowering in a scene of incredible filth.

They said their parents were away at work and that they were locked in to protect them from the ferocious dogs that ran wild through the tunnels. There were many other children who were hidden away similarly while their fathers and mothers worked.

I asked to see others. The guide hurried me out into the open air, refusing to answer my questions concerning the number of unemployed persons living in the tunnels.

In late November the Poles seemed to have come to understand the Allies' failure to supply them with troops or planes. At first many believed this was deliberate negligence on the part of the French and English. The garrisons at both Hela and the Westerplatte until the day of their surrender thought that Allied ships and men were hurrying to their rescue.

They received the knowledge that no 'Tommies' were even near their beleaguered positions, nor had any intention

of coming to their relief, with amazement. After some months, however, most Poles realized that two indisputable factors governed Allied inaction.

First, at the beginning of the campaign, the Polish Government did not want help, refused it curtly. Second, a march to the east was strategically impossible for units of enough strength to be of any real assistance. As was arranged in secret staff meetings in Paris, the Poles were to fall back to the Vistula at the start of the hostilities and hold defensive positions until the French and English cracked the West Wall. The Corridor was to be abandoned the day war began.

The French begged to send adequate general staffs to the Polish armies.

Warsaw with a high hand turned down French pleas, claiming that Polish armies could be commanded as well, if not better, by native generals. Finally, when the campaign was crumbling left and right, the Poles asked for an old French general who had taught in the Polish War College.

The French advised that the man asked for was completely incompetent. Again they tried to send good staff leadership to the Poles. Their offer was coldly refused.

The general requested arrived, took one look at the situation, judged it hopeless, and was back in Paris within three days.

Instead of carrying out the carefully laid plans evolved in Allied staff conferences previous to war, the Poles sent large armies into the Corridor with the intention of pushing columns into Germany and laying siege to Berlin.

These troops were neatly caught in Nazi pincer movements and surrounded by an iron ring of advancing German soldiery. Too late the Poles did fall back to the Vistula and the Bzura. Then it was simply a question of 'mopping up' wherever resistance persisted.

The Allies knew that the only feasible operation in Poland, the only chance the Poles had, was to fall back and maintain a stubborn defence, making possible a long campaign in the east and thereby providing Hitler with two fronts upon which to fight. Geographically, by both land and sea, Poland could not receive men, supplies, and armaments. This the Polish

generals admitted, yet blindly proceeded to do everything in a contrary manner, letting patriotism and stupidity be their guides. Intelligent Poles acknowledge their blunders, not laying the blame at Allied doors.

"It was," as a Polish cavalry officer told me, "utterly inexcusable! Such tactics," he went on, "were typical of the backwardness of Pilsudski's attitude towards the Army. Through his dislike of everything modern our armies were overburdened with horse cavalry, and were far short of the mechanized vehicles which were sorely needed in September."

The later *débâcle* of the French Army in face of the German onslaught has put the Polish failure in an entirely new light.

A German official wished to impress a group of journalists on a tour of Poland. "They," he stated, "will be shown the difference between the efficient cleanliness of the German people and the sloppy, insanitary conditions prevalent among the Polish."

To illustrate this we were to be shown the old nursing home in Thorn. After a glimpse, and a sniff, of this the correspondents would have the privilege of going through the new N.S.V. home hurriedly built since the German invasion.

The old Polish hospital was fully as terrible both in sight and in smell as he had promised. The odours and general uncleanness were startling in their intensity. Patients lay on dirty pallets in a state of pathetic resignation. They were Poles—not of German origin! The place resembled in nearly every detail the public pest-houses of another century.

The correspondents were taken to the new German hospital. It was hoped that the contrast would not be lost on the visitors.

An N.S.V. guide asserted that the building had been hastily built and was nearly finished. Patients would enter soon. In the meantime N.S.V. "Schwestern" lived there. It was a tribute to German efficiency that so very much could be accomplished in so short a time.

All went well until the top floor was inspected. Here in one of the nurses' dormitories was glaring proof of the guide's deliberate attempt to mislead the newsmen.

On the swinging doors of the dormitory was large gold lettering, half scraped off, which was Polish ! The hospital had been erected by the Poles and was unfinished when the war began. The Nazis had commandeered it and claimed the whole unit as their own creation. The first place we had been taken to had not been in use for a year or more.

I asked the guide about the lettering. Glowering, he refused to answer, and ignored my repetition of the question. The new hospital was where the *Deutsches Volk* were to be quartered when ill. Mere Poles were relegated to the veritable pigsty we had first seen.

Though much of Poland is primitive, the hospital in Thorn is evidence of the rehabilitation the Polish Government had been carrying out for some time. I saw other similar traces of such efforts in the south as well as in other parts of the country.

In the north Gdynia is the most outstanding example. It is still a beautiful little port, despite shell-torn buildings in a few parts and acres of broken windows. Money had been poured into its construction, and the result is a modern, compact community, well planned and prettily laid out in streets and squares. Furthermore, it was spotlessly clean.

When the Germans occupied it every Pole was immediately under suspicion. The avenues and public places were guarded by hundreds of *Feldpolizei*, or field police, who stood about with Chicago riot guns and tear-gas bombs ready for any sign of general trouble.

The rattle of firing-squads in the distance was a frequent sound. The guns of the *Schleswig-Holstein*, the German training-ship that assisted in the taking of the Westerplatte, still pounded away at Hela. The battle of Oxhoeft was in progress in the suburbs. Long lines of hungry Poles stood in crowded food queues. From a prosperous city of flourishing trade Gdynia overnight became a graveyard of fear and ruthless conquest.

For weeks dread hung over every Polish man in Gdynia. Portions of the Polish Army which had opposed the Germans previous to the taking of the port were said to have thrown

away their uniforms and donned civilian clothes, thereby hoping to avoid being treated as prisoners of war. The Nazis claimed that these numbered thousands.

Because they had changed clothes, they automatically became spies. That was the Nazi viewpoint. The firing-squads worked overtime. Poles I spoke with said that it was hardly possible to prove to Nazi satisfaction that one was not an escaped prisoner of war. The verdict apparently affected every male of military age in the city. Many were killed and hundreds taken prisoner on the supposition that they had worn the Polish uniform. The Poles said bitterly that it was merely a convenient method of doing away with Polish men of military age.

Certainly Gdynia, with its beautiful white buildings, had turned into a place of inherent fear, starvation, and hopelessness. It was only the first of many towns I saw in Poland where a terrible fatalism was sadly apparent in every one I met.

"There is," a Nazi official in Berlin affirmed, "always the Jewish question. We feel that it is better for Germany and, perhaps, for the Jews themselves, that the regions round Lublin have become what might be termed a reservation for Jews. There they are well treated, allowed to continue what trades they may have pursued in the Reich, and bother no one.

"It is unfortunate that many are forced to leave their homes and occupations, but, as a race, they are used to that! There is, of course, some supervision, but no cruelty. They will soon adapt themselves to their new environment."

That is a mild statement for the Press unofficially. Officially, nothing or little is said. Although questions concerning the fate of those who go to Lublin are asked repeatedly in the Ministry of Propaganda and Foreign Office Press conferences, no answer is ever offered or the query is ignored.

Actually, conditions in the Jewish reservation are horrible. The last thing Nazis feel obliged to do is to render any help to Jews. Consequently food, clothing, and shelter are of the most primitive order if available at all.

The practice of removing Jews from towns throughout

Germany and shipping them away to Poland at a few hours' notice has become widespread in the Reich.

I know of numerous instances where families have been broken up, and periods ranging from an hour to twenty-four given to leave under escort. Hundreds of Jews are packed into railway carriages and rolled off to the east. The doors are seldom opened until the destination is reached, which may be two or three weeks because of the slow rail service and the precedence given to every other type of traffic.

One specific case illustrates the utter callousness with which Jews are disposed of and sent away.

A man in a small town in Oldenburg travelled to a nearby city on business. He was away three days. When he returned his family had been arrested, packed into a waiting goods train, and were on their way to Lublin. Frantic, he rushed to the authorities. After considerable argument they agreed to send him to the place to which his loved ones had gone.

Then they told him they were going to send him anyway ! They just wanted to be sure that he was in agreement !

First he had to secure the equivalent of about sixteen pounds, to start him out on his "new life." Then he must report to the police-station with his tools. He was a carpenter. When he reached the reservation he would be expected to help to construct the wooden barracks that would serve as a temporary home.

He reported with the money and working requisites.

A goods wagon was waiting, and he squeezed in with a hundred other men of his race. The door was slammed shut and sealed. In it was a small opening through which scraps of bread and hot water posing as tea were shoved once a day. There were no sanitary facilities.

Three days later the doors were opened. S.S. guards waited silently until the Jews filed out. Calmly they announced that their wards would need neither the money they had been required to bring with them nor the tools of their trades.

All personal possessions were given to the guards. Every prisoner was subjected to a careful search. One man had made the mistake of secreting a family jewel on his person.

It should have been given up to the police before he left. He was shot.

Then the men were ordered to climb back into the cars.

The doors were not opened for another two weeks. When the prisoners again saw light the train had arrived.

"This," said an S.S. man, "is your destination!" Nothing was visible other than desolate steppe.

When the occupants of the goods wagons—for a whole train had been formed on the way—asked where their families were, and the settlement they had been told they were being sent to, the guards laughed.

"Make your own settlement!" they replied.

"But you have our tools, our money!" the Jews answered.

Roughly the S.S. guards threatened the men with their bayoneted rifles and told them to move along to the south. They had not been taken to Lublin, but near the Russian frontier. In the succeeding weeks the party spent a perilous time dodging Russian frontier guards, who shot anyone attempting to cross their borders. They managed to scrape a meagre subsistence from the countryside. Eventually a few got across the Rumanian frontier. What happened to the rest is not known.

In Warsaw Jews are suffering unbelievable barbarities. As the Jewish and workers' quarters of the city received some of the worst of the bombardments during the siege, these districts are still mostly blocks of rubble and shattered brick. Jews are confined to such ghettos, managing as best they can in tenement houses that were holed repeatedly by high-explosive shells and bombs. During the winter thousands must have died from exposure alone.

It is natural that the greatest danger from typhus and cholera should centre in this part of Warsaw. Whenever the S.S. authorities have the slightest suspicion of either of these diseases in the Jewish quarters squads of men burn out whole buildings in which any trace of the plagues has been reported.

That human beings happen to be in the condemned structures makes no difference. They are burned out as well!

A cordon of guards surrounds the area. Fugitives from the flames often attempt escape. The guards then shoot those trying to flee.

When such burnings occur an area several hundred yards from the cordon is roped off and persons are warned not to approach. If the warning is ignored anyone seen within the forbidden boundaries is shot on sight.

Reliable sources assert that this type of 'Jew-burning' is common, not only in Warsaw, but over the rest of the countryside. It is understood that the S.S. is not too particular whether typhus is suspected or not.

In Graudenz an old Pole aptly expressed a significant fact. He said, "We do not fear the man with the eagle on his breast nearly as much as the one who carries that bird on his arm!"

What he meant was that the German regular soldier wears the eagle of the Reich on his tunic over his heart. The Schutzstaffel, or S.S. men, have the same crest on their right arm. The S.S. is Himmler's private army. Augmented by the Gestapo, in plain clothes, these young brutes dominate Poland to-day.

Brutality "for Adolf Hitler and the Reich" is the real key to the S.S. code. Illustrative of their increasing power is the private order that was sent to every S.S. man from his chief, Himmler. The order makes rape and seduction a duty. German men are at the front with the Army. Germans with pure blood must survive. Therefore the S.S. man is encouraged to procreate himself at every opportunity with Aryan partners. Lastly the order said that German women must be told to be brave—must serve their Führer!

Throughout Poland the Army has sprinkled a few reservists here and there, but the real rulers are the S.S. and the Gestapo. Hans Frank, the Governor-General of the German-created state, is a high officer in the Schutzstaffel. All authorities in cities and villages throughout the land are S.S. men.

The German Red Cross, the National Socialist Welfare Organization, and the bulk of the regular Army troops that were stationed in Poland have gone. Now journalists are barred. American Consular representatives have been ejected



by order of the Third Reich. And the Poles have been left to their fate.

During the eastern campaign Poland was a vast storehouse of food. Geese, fat hams, and butter were all available in quantity—for the Army! Vanloads of delicacies poured into Berlin and other German centres for months.

Meanwhile food queues formed in the conquered territories. They formed as soon as the Germans passed on to new battlefields. The Army headquarters and field messes fed well. The queues increased. Every Polish peasant used to have his small store of good food. Few farms were without a flock of geese. Germans discovered this quickly, sent the Poles into bread queues, and appropriated the supplies.

Soldiers returning on Christmas leave filled their knapsacks with cheeses, tea, and coffee. Officially this was forbidden. When I mentioned it to a Nazi in Warsaw he scoffed.

"German soldiers are not allowed to pillage!" he insisted.

Two nights later, back in Berlin, I attended a party given by several Germans who had seen service in the campaign. They had returned with booty precious in food-rationed Germany.

Real tea was served. Sausage, the *pièce de résistance*, even to a dozen helpings, was on the table. The guests let their eyes roll in wonder. Here was affluence beyond dreams!

"From Poland!" announced the host, and lips curled momentarily in scorn. The guests doubly enjoyed the feast. The host was going back shortly. "Fill your pockets!" he cried generously. "Where I am going there is plenty!"

When questioned about the Poles he replied, "They have their bread queues! It is enough for an inferior people! All this goodness should have been German long before this!"

Now the well has run dry in the east. Swarms of geese no longer waddle across bountiful fields, and the peasants have no further hidden stores.

Whereas formerly young S.S. recruits and Gestapo agents sought posts in the stricken land, they now beg for duties elsewhere. Ugly stories are going the rounds in S.S. and secret police headquarters. Geese and succulent Polish hams

to be gorged while friends eked out thin meals with ration-cards at home are no longer to be had. Germans now meet angry knives in the darkness. Sabotage continues though the most stringent punishment measures are in effect.

The Poles seemingly don't care. Racial suicide has gripped the people. And the young men who had hoped for Polish transfer are looking elsewhere for soft jobs where food is plentiful and effort slight.

The Army was strict. Discipline ruled with riot guns on its shoulder and the field police alert. But the Army had been fair. An officer who had been in Lodz came back to Berlin with his unit. He had a short leave, then was going to the West Wall. In disgust he told of S.S. activity.

"Once I actually drew my pistol," he affirmed. "It was in the street in Lodz. Three Jews walked in single file near the gutter. An S.S. man came along. There was plenty of room to pass; but this ruffian pushed the Jews into the gutter, and kicked them until two were unconscious. 'That's what you get for being Jews!' he screamed as he wiped his bloody boots on one of the prostrate men. I don't like Jews. This, however, was too much! Without thinking, I had my gun out of its holster; but I controlled my feelings!

"The next day a new decree was issued which forbade Jews to stir out of their houses after eight at night. The order read that three Jews had attacked a single S.S. man, but had been beaten off! Jews were dangerous in the streets at night!"

The officer admitted that he and his class abhorred what the S.S. was doing in Poland, but added that, terrible as it was, their presence and methods were necessary to the safety and stability of the Reich. It is an attitude I have heard expressed many times. Naturally it is not shouted from the housetops.

The exact number of Poles, men, women, and children, who have died, or been killed, since September 1939 is unknown. Some estimates state the figure at about five millions. Others claim a total slightly less, but no official source outside Germany asserts that the list of dead is below the three million mark.

German High Command *communiqués* during the war boasted that over a million Polish soldiers had been killed.

Surely, since the Middle Ages or the vicious inroads of the Mongol hordes no part of Europe has ever been the torture rack that Poland is to-day.

## CHAPTER XII

### AN ERSATZ CHRISTMAS

*THE* winter of 1939-40 was the most severe Germany had experienced in eleven years. The war, and the serious coal shortage due to the inferior rail transport system of the Reich, caused terrible suffering in Berlin and other large cities. In the country wood could be chopped and used as fuel. In the cities this was highly impracticable. Everything depended on the railways. Those lines that were in good order and available had been given over to Army needs, transporting troops on leave, and delivery of general supplies.

For weeks the topic of conversation among both Germans and Americans in Berlin was how much heat their flat or hotel was supplying and what the immediate future held in the way of warmth and comfort.

Even Embassy and Consulate employees had their problems. Though the Wilhelmstrasse assured them that they would receive first call on whatever coal was at hand, many were forced to evacuate their flats temporarily and move to hotels or to the abode of a luckier compatriot whose landlord had been able to get a little coal. Then, when the store had run out, they would move to another district where some one else was sure of a minimum of heat for a few days.

For eight weeks in my *pension* I had neither heat nor running hot water. If I wanted a bath I had to instruct my *Wirtin*, or landlady, to put kettles on the stove hours ahead.

I worked at night, so did not get up until eleven in the morning. It was necessary for the hot water heating, by the gas method, to begin at six. At eleven enough water covered the bottom of the tub to enable me to bath. When I had finished the prospect of climbing out into an icy atmosphere was anything but pleasant. I soon discovered that if I bathed every day the extra charge for the gas to heat the water more than equalled the rent for my entire suite.

One heard more grumbling in Berlin during this period than at any other time. I have already told how other factors contributed to the general dissatisfaction. The main part of every war-time German meal was potatoes. As soon as cold weather began they stopped coming into Berlin, or if they did arrive they were frozen—useless for eating purposes. This was true of other essential vegetables. Cabbage and turnips were ruined as fast as they were shipped.

At the Ministry of Propaganda two promises were made. First, the shortage would soon cease, as measures were being taken ; they became effective when the cold snap broke and the danger and discomfort had passed. Second, the following year a similar situation would not happen ; already the Reich was preparing against such an eventuality. The German public received this news with silent bitterness. It did not help present conditions.

The canals were frozen. The river Spree was free only through the city of Berlin. At both ends, outside the city, ice blocked it completely. Formerly most of the city's food supplies had come *via* the canal route and the river Spree. Bill Shirer was kidded about his broadcast statement that all the waterways of Europe were icebound.

We challenged him. The Spree was still free of ice.

For days Bill failed to discover why this phenomenon was an actual fact. His sources, all trustworthy, assured him that canals and rivers, including the Danube, were frozen fast. Yet even on the coldest nights the Spree continued to flow freely.

We knew why, but had not told Bill. Finally he found out for himself. The Spree is fed with chemical wastage from a dozen factories along its banks in Berlin. The freezing-point of the water was lowered considerably by the entrance of these foreign elements.

When finally triumphant he came into the Adlon Bar one day for lunch and announced his scoop—or what he thought was one—we all gave him the merry ha-ha ! He was absolutely correct in his original assertion ; but in those bitter days when warmth was at the highest premium a joke was worth while savouring—and Bill laughed as heartily as the rest of us when he was told of our hoax.

All Berlin was snow-covered for fifty-six days. It was piled in giant drifts, narrowing the pavements and streets to footpaths and lanes. Icy weather, even at midday, was the rule.

Both Polish prisoners and Jews were ordered out to clear the streets of snow. Thousands worked ceaselessly from dawn to dusk. After they had gone home, another fall of snow replaced what they had been able to shovel away.

Official Party orders were placed in the vestibules of all blocks of flats. They demanded that a minimum of hot water should be used—banned baths!

"Every one must sacrifice for Führer and Fatherland!" they read.

My *Wirtin* took terrible chances in supplying me with hot bath water twice a week. At night, when I returned from the office or the *Taverne*, an electric heater stood by my desk. The room was always frigid. The heater became a fetish, a symbol of heat! On the days I paid my rent—every Friday—I got a hot brick in my bed. The rest of the week I did without it.

"Why," I asked, "do you always give me a hot brick to heat the sheets only on Friday?"

"Excuse, Herr Raleigh," my *Wirtin* replied, "but that is the only day I dare use the extra gas to heat it." And then, in calm frankness, "Besides, it is an appropriate day!"

Occasionally coal shipments did come into Berlin. They went directly to high Nazi officials to heat their homes. Goebbels' house, behind the American Embassy, never suffered from lack of heat. Coal vans drew up and were admitted into the gates of the miniature estate daily. Little Joseph felt no pinch of winter. But then that was to be expected. I was astounded when I asked a dozen Germans in all parts of Berlin where the diminutive Minister lived. They didn't know, though it was common knowledge among the foreign colony.

Then other small shipments entered the Nazi capital.

A new racket began. Coalmen would deliver a load to a house and then refuse to carry it to the cellar unless they received extra money for the trouble, although by contract

they were obliged to deliver directly to the cellar. Either the occupants of the house or flat turned out *en masse* and did the transferring themselves or the coalmen dumped the load on the pavement outside. The drivers made it a point to arrive late in the afternoon. If the coal remained outside the whole night half of it would be gone in the morning.

Briquettes, or bricks of coal-dust, sold for as much as two marks apiece. Even the richest of Berliners were unable to get enough coal to heat their rooms.

The office buildings and hotels had used up their reserve supplies. World-famous establishments such as the Adlon, Bristol, and Esplanade announced to their guests that hot water would be available only from seven until ten in the morning. Central-heating plants in the hotels functioned strictly on a part-time basis.

At the Esplanade Miss Schultz and I worked with our overcoats on and electric stoves going under the desks. Even these failed to warm the *Tribune* suite, and most of the time we could see our breath.

The comfort of hot tea and coffee was doubtful. The beverages claiming to be tea or coffee tasted of anything but the real thing. Tea was being made from raspberry leaves, rose-bushes, and strawberry plants. Coffee still was a poor imitation called *Malzkaffee*, but even the quality of this substitute had fallen to the point where it was hardly drinkable.

However, the water containing God-knows-what masquerading as a beverage was always steaming, and between foot-toasting at the electric stoves and frequent draughts of coloured hot water we managed to write our stuff and file.

Berlin became filled with more and more Polish prisoners. These were brought into the city from a camp near by where thirty-five thousand were interned. They worked in gangs from morning to night clearing away snow. Increasing numbers of Jews were seen working under Party surveillance.

The Poles had no guards, were given instructions, left, and called for at night. I asked why they were allowed such freedom. The answer was simple. They had no place to escape to! Between them and Poland were hundreds of miles of hostile, well-patrolled country. Even should they

get home every district of the conquered land was controlled by the Nazis.

Literally they were men without a country !

Still it snowed, and every night seemed colder than the one before. Berliners complained more loudly, and were cautioned by the Party that no sacrifice was too great for Adolf Hitler. The limitations of clothes cards and special *Bezugsscheine* prevented the purchase of suitable warm clothing.

Each German received a clothes card with one hundred points on it. This was to last one year. A suit took sixty points ; a necktie, three ; an overcoat, sixty ; underwear, twenty-five. The people either equipped themselves for the winter season, and went without during the rest of the year, or froze. Money meant nothing. Without a clothes card a million marks could not buy an overcoat !

The police force donned heavy boot coverings, thick and lined with wool. The Army was warmly clad, but the people had to get along as well as they could. The newspapers began printing occasional stories of persons frozen to death. Actual check revealed that dozens succumbed every night. But Germany claimed that she had no beggars within her boundaries, that every one had a home and work.

The Tiergarten was the only beautiful part of Berlin. Everywhere else great piles of dirty snow were heaped beside the gutters. Slush and accumulated dirt were underfoot in every street and boulevard. The great park, the former deer preserve of the Prussian kings, was crystallized in ice and snow. The trees bent under their sheen of glistening ice. Drifts towered softly in the open places. The rivers and brooks that run through the Tiergarten were frozen solid for weeks. German boys and girls skated and dragged their sleighs to the tops of small inclines and, shouting gaily, slid to the bottom.

One day, returning from the *Rundfunkhaus* after a broadcast, I saw a group of Hitler Youth posing with shovels and picks for an official cameraman. They shovelled industriously while the camera whirred. When the cameraman had sufficient material the group formed into squads and marched off, singing in unison.



Later in the week I saw the same pictures released for propaganda in the current newsreels. The commentator proudly announced that the Hitler-Jugend was bending its back to clear away the snow. All the winter this was the only time I saw youths in Hitler-Jugend uniforms wielding shovels.

Outside the American Express one afternoon when the sun was sinking and the temperature was far below freezing-point a shivering man approached me. He had noticed my overcoat.

"That's a beautiful coat," he said admiringly, as his teeth chattered. He addressed me in English without a trace of accent.

"Thank you," I answered.

"Please don't get me wrong," he said in pure American, "but I know you are an American, and perhaps you can help me."

"Yes," I replied, with a trace of coldness. Beggars with hard-luck stories were plentiful, though official reports still indignantly denied that the Reich harboured anyone who was poverty-stricken.

"I don't want any money," he added hastily, "but I have been the victim of German false promises. I came from Milwaukee; was told not only that my fare to Europe would be paid, but that I should find plenty of employment in the Reich at excellent wages—and a nice house to boot.

"I am a machinist by trade. For years I could not get work in America. I am of German descent, and the proposition put to me by an agent in Milwaukee sounded good.

"I inquired from some friends of mine at home. They had letters. Others had gone before me; had written back that everything was wonderful in Germany, that there was plenty of work, good wages, and fine living conditions. I did not want home relief, and everything looked genuine, so I went.

"When we got here—there was a whole shipload of us—we found a different set-up than we had expected. We got work immediately on Adolf Hitler's basis of twenty-four hours a day if necessary. The pay was a tenth of what we had been promised. We were housed outside Berlin in miserable

hovels. Most of us had relatives here. We were told that unless we wrote back glowing reports they would be sent to the concentration camps. Gestapo agents were everywhere. Some of our group went to the Consulate, and their families disappeared.

"I married a German girl several months ago. If I go to the Consulate the Gestapo will know of my visit. On account of my wife and her family I am afraid to go. I'm taking a chance talking to you, but I know no Americans other than the unfortunates who came over with me.

"Would you ask what could be done about getting me and my wife out of the country and back home? I'll be here this time to-morrow. There is a temporary closure until more machines are installed in my shop near Rangsdorf. The day after to-morrow I could not come. We go back to work. If you come to see me the cat will be out of the bag."

He paused, looking furtively about. I had heard stories about what happened to Americans who were lured to Germany with the prospect of good jobs with high salaries and ideal workers' communities in which to live.

I went to the Consulate, where I was told that the problem was not a new one.

Unfortunately when the emigrants left America to live permanently in Germany they renounced their citizenship rights. That was part of the bargain. A number had come to the Consulate complaining of how they had been duped. Some had been sent back to America. Many were in the position of the man who had asked me to help him, in dread fear of the Gestapo and what would happen to his relatives who were of German birth.

I left the details with the Consulate. They could do nothing unless he appeared in person. It was possible to get him back to the States if the facts were exactly as he had stated to me. The fate of his wife was another matter.

The next day I met him in the same place and told him what the situation was. He would have to go to the Consulate in person. He looked doubtful, again explaining what that would mean to him and his wife. At the time I left Berlin he had not turned up to establish his identity, so far as the

Consulate records showed. The last time I saw him I left him with an old overcoat of mine over his shoulders.

Both the Embassy and the Consulate had been extremely disturbed before the war by the influx of these Americans who believed they were stepping into a veritable workers' paradise. The situation was a difficult one as the Government of Germany had to be considered. The Consulate informed me that the only sure cure was an *exposé* by the American Press. Letters that were sent home from those who had gone abroad always read attractively. Until September ship after ship carried hundreds of skilled labourers to Germany's shores. Few returned.

Joe Harsch asked me to come with him to a birthday party of a friend. She was twenty-five, had done some work for him as a translator, and hoped that he would come and bring a friend, so that her party would be a success. She said that others who would be there would like to meet and talk with Americans. Joe promised that it would be interesting. She lived in a rather poor workers' quarter.

I agreed to go, and on one of the coldest nights of February we set out for the party. Her family's flat was on the fifth floor of a tenement in the Reinickendorf section of Berlin.

At the door we were greeted by Joe's friend, and then in quick succession met her mother, sisters, and the guests. The flat was icy cold. Every one murmured a hasty apology and tried to forget about it. I assured them that it was not necessary to apologize, as my rooms were just as chilling.

"Well," said the mother, "war is war!" One or two of the guests sympathized briefly. We all kept our overcoats on, with the exception of the girl whose birthday it was. She had painstakingly pressed a white organdie dress with a sash of red; and although she shivered, no one urged her to don a coat.

We all sat round a large table lit with precious candles. That alone made the evening a festive one, as it was hard to buy candles anywhere since Christmas sales had depleted what stores there were of wax tapers in Berlin.

The first course of the birthday meal was steaming hot soup and rolls. One of the guests leaned over to me and said

that we should eat well to-night, as he happened to know that the family had been saving meat and food-cards for a long while so that this repast should be a great success.

A cheap table wine was served which was drunk sparingly, as there were only two bottles for nine persons. "It is special!" one of the sisters proudly announced. One can buy wines in Berlin, but good choices are rare and, furthermore, expensive. Many families have given up the custom of drinking wine with meals.

Next the *pièce de résistance* was served, *Bratwurst* and *Sauerkraut*! Every one declared that this was a splendid treat, and in such abundance!

There was enough for two helpings for all. With the meat and *Sauerkraut* were boiled potatoes. The hostess pointed out in answer to a compliment on the meal that she had been lucky to get *Sauerkraut* as most of it was going to the Army. The genuine article could not be bought in restaurants.

To finish off the meal chocolate cakes had been prepared.

This was possible, said one guest secretively, because a certain woman in the neighbourhood had hoarded several pounds of genuine chocolate just before Christmas. Also part of what was in the cakes had been taken from a supply that had been carefully put aside when war seemed likely last August.

My informant was very careful not to divulge the name of the hoarder. "It is a prison offence," he warned. "But it makes the cakes taste all the better, doesn't it?" he finished, grinning.

After the chocolate cakes coffee was served. But apparently no one had hoarded any of this, as the taste was abominable. Several of the guests bravely drank whole cups, but the majority politely swallowed a sip or two and left the rest untouched. The hostess obviously did not mind, and her expression when she tasted the substitute mixture showed that she was in full sympathy with her guests.

Later she told me they had not meant to serve any coffee at all, and that her family usually omitted it from their meals because even the best they could get was so poor, but she'd made a concession this time because of the party.

"Even if it's bad," she announced, "it wouldn't be a birthday dinner without coffee, or what passes for it!"

After the meal was over every one danced to the music from the wireless. One man was rash enough to say that it was a shame that we couldn't tune in to a good American station so that we might get some good dance music. The wireless set was the family's prize possession and was powerful enough to get America easily on the short-wave dial. No one answered him, but it was clear that all the guests agreed. The mother frowned.

At twelve o'clock the dancing stopped (it hadn't been very popular because every one had to dance in his or her overcoat.) The hostess had finally put on a wrap, though it was plain that she hated to conceal her laboriously pressed dress.

As we were leaving I asked the girl's mother what the cross meant which she wore round her neck. It appeared to be an Iron Cross, first class, at a distance. She replied that it was a '*Mutterkreuz*' awarded by Adolf Hitler to every German mother who had borne more than three children. She had had four, and wore her decoration with pride. Strangely in this house the elders were pro-Nazi, while the children objected violently to the precepts of National Socialism.

Our hostess told us in the hall that there were constant quarrels in the household owing to political friction. Her eldest brother was in the Army against his will. The next youngest was dead, as was the father. She and her sister upheld the essentials of freedom despite the mother's grim disapproval.

There was a sudden dash to get home before the curfew hour of one in the morning.

The party had been a great success, and the guests were effusive in their appreciation, particularly about the extra servings of *Bratwurst*. It had made the evening a grand occasion.

For years the German railways have suffered from aging equipment and insufficient rolling-stock. The winter, with its demands for heavy transport, plus the needs of the Army, had crowded the available trains and endangered the Reich's

network of railways. Frequent accidents occurred, some killing hundreds. The cars were wooden and old. The intense cold affected roadbeds and rails. Usually the official Press said nothing about the accidents. Occasionally mention would be made, but always on an obscure back page.

The German loves nothing better than his winter holiday in the Alps, where skiing is always excellent. Crowds of gaily clad holiday-makers jammed the stations in Berlin; they waited hours for trains. The schedule had been cut to one train a day to any main point, and branch connexions were doubtful.

The Kattegat between Germany and Denmark had frozen solid for the first time in recorded history. The train ferries stopped running. Denmark was supplying herself by air. North, south, and all over the Reich trains were taken off their regular schedules.

When one was able to get aboard a first-, second-, or third-class ticket meant nothing. Unless you arrived immediately the train came in you got no seat. Persons who reached the station forty minutes before the train was due to leave had to crowd into the corridors. They were as closely packed as the London Underground in the rush-hour.

The European railway systems must supply every passenger with a seat. If it is too crowded in the second-class carriages, for which you may have a ticket, the guard must offer you first-class accommodation. But this rule did not help, for it was impossible for the guards to collect tickets. They could not get through the corridors because of the extra hundreds every train carried.

I rode from Berlin to Munich early in March, leaning on my suitcase, and never saw a guard or other train official during the entire trip. All round me were soldiers on leave and people who had waited days for permission to travel. After the holiday season official permission had to be acquired; and the reason for the journey must be a vital one before the trip could be made.

The accidents continued, caused by a shortage of railwaymen, neglected road-beds, and inferior equipment. It got to the point where any foreigner taking a trip on German

railways tossed a coin. Heads he would make it—tails he wouldn't !

The blackout being particularly stringent near railway yards, the shunting of trains was a dangerous occupation. Many railwaymen fell under locomotives at night despite every possible precaution. When large trains were to be moved in the Anhalter Bahnhof yards in Berlin yard lights would sometimes be switched on for a short time ; but the death roll was extraordinarily high in this terminus.

Often a goods train would override a siding and crash on to a main line. When Miss Schultz travelled from Berlin to Switzerland in February this happened to her train. A wagon had jumped the track, blocking through traffic. All passengers were obliged to leave the train in the dead of night—with the temperature far below zero—and walk a mile to military buses, which took them forty miles to another train that had been brought up in preparation for the stranded passengers. She arrived in Basle nine hours late.

A train coming into Berlin, or anywhere else in the Reich, on time was easily the exception rather than the rule. Bill Shirer, returning from Amsterdam, was fifteen hours late getting into Berlin, and from the Dutch border travelled in five different trains, all locals, from point to point, waiting at each small terminus until another train could be made up which would carry him another fifty miles or so.

The main line ordinarily runs directly between the Dutch and German capitals, but the movements of troops, already foretelling the invasion of Holland, and the cold made it necessary for trains to be taken in sections from one rail centre to another.

Bill said that he would arrive at some small station with hundreds of other passengers, most of whom had stood in the aisles or had sat on their luggage in the cramped corridors. The stationmaster would be consulted as to whether he could make up a train to a point nearer Berlin. After an hour or so a train would puff in from the yards, and all would depart again with the warning that the rolling-stock had to be returned immediately and could only proceed to another town, never more than fifty miles away.

Schedules had been completely upset. Finally a hundred miles from Berlin a through train was available. Bill stood in a corridor the entire journey.

Turning an unfortunate experience to good use, he featured his trip in his next night's broadcast. As there were no special news events of importance on that date, he filled his time easily.

During the winter I arrived only once on time after a train journey. In fact, from Berlin to Garmisch-Partenkirchen the connexion was made in record time. We got to the Bavarian resort on an official Ministry of Propaganda train provided for by Otto Dietrich, the Reichspressechef. The trip to Garmisch was admittedly a junket. The majority of the foreign Press had been invited to cover the International Winter Games, these replacing the Winter Olympics which usually took place at Garmisch-Partenkirchen. I was to make a broadcast from there.

Though other so-called 'junkets' had been elaborate, this trip exceeded them all in comfort and luxuries. The exclusive sleeping-car train for our use alone and the prompt arrival indicated that this indeed was to be something special.

We pulled into the station early in the morning. The sun shone brightly on the snowy roofs of the quaint chalets. The air was sharply invigorating. Characters out of musical comedies stood about the station square, their leather breeches and their Bavarian hats with white brushes stuck gaily in them completing the stage-setting impression.

The snow crunched crisply as we clambered into waiting buses. This was Bavaria, a country of cheery people, simple ideas, and gay customs. Laughter, music, ruddy health, and the love of sport characterizes Garmisch. Here the Party and National Socialism are not the ruling factors of life. The town, of course, is Nazi, and one hears occasional "*Heil Hitlers*," but mostly politics take a back seat for ski-runs and hockey games, and "*Grüss Gott*" is the usual greeting.

The change from Berlin was as heady as wine. Depressing cares and the feeling of stifling discipline evaporated in the clear mountain sunlight and invigorating air. I settled down to studying the hockey programme, resolving to see every game.



Our headquarters was the Sonnenbichl Hotel, a rambling inn that clung to a mountainside and overlooked the town. Bill Shirer and I were given a splendid room and bath. Others were not so lucky. Every one was paired off and fairly well accommodated. As usual the best rooms went to the Ministry of Propaganda's picked escorts.

The International Winter Games were a poor substitute for the Winter Olympics. A few weeks before a windy official had appeared in a Ministry of Propaganda Press conference and announced that, despite the large new ice stadium which was being built and other improvements, there would be no Olympic games in Garmisch-Partenkirchen in 1940.

We already had named the games as being a meeting of "Germany and her six stooges." The nations taking part were the Protectorate, Hungary, Italy, Slovakia, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Germany. There were to be ski-runs and jumping, but hockey and the figure-skating contests promised to be the most interesting.

That afternoon we watched the Protectorate give Bulgaria a sound beating. The play was hard, the Czechs exhibiting unusual skill. The Bulgarians were a poor match; and although they were the pick of their country, many American secondary-school hockey teams could have beaten them with ease. That night Germany gave Italy a licking. The Nazi team was good, but the Czechs were still outstanding.

Between the periods figure-skaters performed. Germany's current idol was cheered frantically whenever she made an appearance. She and her partner were splendid. The Germans worship their figure-skating champions the same as we revere a football or baseball hero. None of the other contestants touched the charm and grace of the German stars. They won without trouble.

They danced to music provided by records amplified by loud-speakers. Rumbas, fox-trots, and waltzes were interpreted equally beautifully by the performers. One favourite was the swing number "Flat-foot Floozie with a Floy Floy." Every one was surprised when this was repeatedly played, for all American swing had long ago been banned from Nazi

Germany. However, this and similar 'hot' music filled the ice stadium daily.

I asked a Bavarian why the jazz selections were allowed.

"This is Bavaria, not Germany, my friend," he said proudly. "We take life a little easier here!"

His sentiments were typical of South Germany. It is not to be thought that the Bavarians harbour ideas of revolution or actively oppose the Nazi Party; but they insist upon a *gemütlich* manner of living—an easy, friendly, pleasant existence without too much worry or responsibility.

After the games the several elaborate hotels in the resort held balls and dances. The bars, of which there were a number in each establishment, were connected by passageways, and one wandered from one room to the next talking with anyone and being greeted with happy laughter and loud "Hellos." Germans had gathered here to rest, to forget their troubles and relax. They did it with ease and true appreciation of their holiday.

We all looked forward to the game between the Protectorate and Germany. Both teams were head and shoulders above the others in the tournament. Furthermore, we could only expect a bitter battle between Czech and German. The game was thrilling, with two fist fights. The referees gave every decision to the Germans. Fouls by Nazi forwards were ignored. All possible advantages went to the team representing the Reich. The Czechs were finally beaten by one goal. The crowd, mostly German, booed the referees throughout the game. Afterwards I talked with a German player, asking him what he thought of the game.

"It was a tough contest," he exclaimed, "one of the toughest I've ever played in. The Czechs are good players." He paused, and then, quietly, "I was ashamed of our referees. They were not fair."

He walked away, saying nothing more. Inquiring, I learned he was one of the hockey stars of Germany, had never joined the Nazi Party, and lived entirely for sport.

We were all angry about the perfidy of the referees, but obviously they had had their orders. Germany must not lose to anyone!

When the time came for my broadcast I made contact with the proper *Rundfunk* representative and asked about facilities. He answered calmly that there was only one place in Garmisch-Partenkirchen where there was a microphone. It was in the tiny coop at the top of the ice stadium. No other facilities had been arranged since the Olympic games four years ago.

The sound coop was approximately the size of a modern flat spare room. It had a window, a 'phone, the mike, and a camp-stool. All arrangements for timing had to come through Berlin by 'phone. Time would be checked by the engineer's watch.

While this may sound simple, international broadcasts are not made without long preparation and timing assured to the fraction of a second. I could not sit down as the engineer was unable to stretch the 'phone wire farther than the camp-stool on which he sat. That day there had not been a single worth-while item of news. The papers, coming from Berlin by plane, were void of interest.

In desperation I had written a script concerning the scene in the stadium during a thrilling moment in the game and the figure-skating immediately following. The piece was mostly about hockey, the surroundings, and Sonja Henie, whose many triumphs in this same stadium were still vividly remembered by many figure-skating fans who had come to see the International Winter Games.

However, at the last moment I got a change of time from Berlin. My new hour was in between the afternoon and evening contests. It was too late to rewrite the script. As I spoke I had to admit the crowd noises for background—and music for the figure-skaters besides.

The music boomed through the empty stadium as I described imaginary whirls and pirouettes of skating performers; six little boys whooped and stamped on the wooden benches outside the glassed-in coop. In Berlin and America I was told my hoax apparently worked beautifully. Every one was enthusiastic, saying that the broadcast was a brilliant idea and had worked out beautifully.

I said nothing about the two marks distributed among the

children, which provided me with fifteen thousand people, two hockey teams, and a dozen figure-skaters !

Berlin at Christmas-time tried its best to don a holiday spirit, to force the grim reality of war into a background of temporary forgetfulness. In the streets at night the season's normal cheerfulness was wholly lacking. The blackout made no exception for the twenty-fifth of December.

In the shops it was different. They were decorated with bright tinsel, red paper bells, and Christmas ornaments.

Awag's, formerly Wertheims, famous Continental department store, surpassed itself. The Nazi managers—it was once Jewish-owned—assured me that never before had so much money been spent on decorations, or on the children's festival display of Fairyland in the main *foyer* of the shop. The festival was beautifully done, with animated animals, brown dwarfs, and fairies waving wands.

I was sent on an assignment. As an American in Berlin I went shopping in Awag's. Theoretically I was to buy gifts for brothers, sisters, and parents. What I was able to get beyond my clothes card, and one meagre permission slip for a necktie, was to be the story.

In Awag's the aisles were crowded with people. Very few carried packages bought in the shop. I asked a shopwalker why this was. He answered that he was certain that the crowds never had had more money to spend at Christmas-time, nor were more willing to spend it, but that the restrictions of *Bezugsscheine*, or special permission slips, limited potential customers. Furthermore, a purchaser would hesitate a long while before parting with precious points on his clothes-card.

Near by was a counter piled high with tablecloths. I listened as an assistant complained to an older couple, examining the goods, that he was selling practically nothing. Berliners were making their old tablecloths do. Using the permission slips for luxuries was not as important as saving them for more important silk and woollen articles.

Still undecided as to what to consider for my 'convenient' family, I noticed a glassed-in partition marked "Cigar Store." A box of Hamburg cigars would do for my mythical father,

first consideration in my gift-buying, story-getting mission. Inside the partition the counters were nearly bare.

One German with a typical Hitler moustache abruptly asked the assistant if he had a certain brand. He received a courteous reply that the desired brand had been sold out days ago, and no more of the same was expected until long after Christmas. The customer shrugged his shoulders in irritation and called sharply to his wife to come along. His attitude was reflected in others who stood near the counter.

Four or five pillars of display boxes stood on the counter. All of them contained paper replicas of popular brands of cigars and cigarettes. The shelves behind them were empty.

The assistant continually repeated that this or that brand of smokes was sold out. He earned his money with a vengeance, for nearly every one had some unpleasant remark to make about the shortage. He received them all with a smile and a genuine "I'm sorry." I did not get my Hamburg cigars. They had not been in stock for months !

In another part of the shop the familiar American sight of a demonstrator caught my eye and ear. He was expounding the virtue of a liquid preparation that was supposed to take the place of shaving-soap. Every German adult had long before received a soap-card, allowing each man only three shaving-sticks a year. Chemical preparations of shaving-cream and facial soap were sold everywhere, all lacking the necessary oils which soap must be made of. They were impossible to use as substitutes for soap.

Germans still bought the inefficient preparations in eternal hope. A large crowd had gathered about the demonstrator.

"The process is simple," he exhorted his listeners. "You simply rub your face with hot or cold water, apply the cream in a thin layer, and shave with complete ease !"

A young soldier watched him closely throughout his demonstration. When the recital was done and about to begin again the soldier grabbed the razor, some of the cream from an open jar, tossed a palmful of water on his cheek, and gravely began to shave. The crowd watched, fascinated. The recital stopped in the middle of a flowery sentence. A look of dismay came over the face of the demonstrator. No

one would dare to interrupt the soldier. He wore the uniform of the Third Reich.

Turning full face to the crowd, the soldier solemnly began scraping his chin. The first inch of pulling the razor across his face brought a howl of pain, and a thin trickle of blood ran out of a small cut.

He threw the razor on the table in merry disdain and laughed at the demonstrator, saying, "Don't you know you can't fool a man from Hamburg? *Himmel! Himmel!*"

The people watching—and now there was double the original crowd—laughed with the man from Hamburg and at the demonstrator. As the soldier moved off, his shoulders still rocking with merriment, the salesman bravely embarked upon his recital. From the edge of the crowd the soldier shouted back that he meant no harm, but that as far as he was concerned real soap and water always worked better for him.

Through department after department I went, trying to find a few things that could be purchased without the eternal *Bezugsschein*. Clothes, linen, woollen sweaters, shoes, ties, shirts, doilies, handkerchiefs, and pillows were all taboo without the triple-stamped paper allowing them to be sold. The camera department was sold out. Musical instruments were hopelessly high-priced; but the stock here too was nearly gone, as was the case in every department selling goods that did not require permission slips for purchases.

I came to the record and music shop. Here was a splendid idea. I could solve most of my difficulties with symphony records. The German family of my story and assignment would love receiving records of their favourite orchestras and musical works.

I selected three books of symphonies. I had my money out ready to pay the assistant when she politely asked if I had brought any old records with me. Confused, I said I hadn't, and then asked why.

"I'm very sorry," she said flatly, "but we cannot sell new records without receiving an equivalent number of old ones. It is a new law." She wasn't sure why, but she had her orders both from the departmental manager and from an S.A. *Gruppenführer* who had called about the matter a day or so ago.

I sadly pushed the records back across the counter and walked away. Germany cannot afford to waste rubber. Gramophone records are made chiefly with this material or a direct derivative. To conserve the country's small supply of the precious war commodity old records must be given up when new ones are bought. The old are melted down to make others, and no drain, even if infinitesimal, is made on German rubber reserves.

Books, requiring no permission slips, were being sold in thousands. The book department was packed with anxious customers who watched the stock dwindle before their turn came. I noticed that few bothered to select certain volumes, or even examine them, but grabbed a stack while they still stood on the counter. One table was piled high with paper-bound volumes. No one was near it, though occasionally some one would hurriedly spot a title, rush to the neglected table, and shove his selection furtively into the hands of an assistant.

The table was full of reprints of books in English, the cheap Continental Tauchnitz and Albatross pocket-size editions. It was not wholly safe for any German to spend too much time at the English book section. The purchase of more than one volume excited suspicion. Shortly before the Reich Propaganda Ministry had announced that all English editions of Tauchnitz and Albatross pocket volumes were to be sold at half-price or withdrawn. Few shops dared to stock them after Christmas.

I picked out an armful. Though my 'family' would get none of these, my own reading shelf was all too bare. An assistant stepped away from the busy counter and accepted my purchases. I thought it strange that she left the frantic mob in front of her to serve me several feet away. She took a long while to check each book.

Presently a uniformed S.S. man begged my pardon.

"Are you German?" he asked.

"No," I said, surprised. "Why?"

"Then you must be American?" he offered.

"Yes, I am. Here is my passport," I replied, knowing that immediate identification is always better in Germany than an argument.

He was even more polite, smiling and bowing himself away. "I'm sorry to have bothered you, but the buying of so many books in English makes us wonder sometimes. You'll excuse me, please." He smiled and walked to a corner where he could watch the English book counter without being readily noticed.

Remembering my imaginary young brother, I went to the toy department. Here was complete pandemonium. Toys needed no *Bezugsscheine*! Bricks, children's games, and animals were going like wildfire. I saw no iron toys, steel sledges, or bicycles. Every toy that contained metal of any sort was absent from the displays. Inquiring, I was told that a large stock had been on hand a week ago, but that it had been sold out before the Christmas rush really began. The toys had been made before the war. No more playthings requiring metal of any sort had been manufactured since September.

There seemed to be only two possibilities left, after I had settled the gift problem with toys for the younger members of my problematical family. I decided to try the sports and furniture departments.

Footballs, basketballs and all other leather equipment had been sold out in the sports department. Attractive ski-ing costumes and bright sweaters were on wax models between the empty showcases. These, of course, could not be bought without *Bezugsscheine*. I settled on a pair of skis.

Yes, I could buy them without any trouble. The only misfortune was that they did not have the proper foot fastenings, these being composed of brass and steel. The assistant had no idea where I might get the equipment. The store did not have it.

Patience fled. "How in the hell do you expect somebody to ski when there's nothing on the runners to bind them to your feet?" I yelled.

"I don't speak English," said the assistant with dignity, which was probably just as well.

I bought no skis. The furniture department was bleak. There were few people in sight. Though one could buy as much as was wanted, the prices were prohibitive—four times as high as in ordinary times. Factories that had been making



furniture now were producing gun-stocks and other military materials. Imports were impossible.

When this furniture had been sold there would be no more. The prices were exorbitant, but Awag's knew they would sell the goods in time at any price.

Outside the store, my arms full of toys, I waited at the corner for the traffic-lights to change.

A man standing beside me spoke. "You've been in Awag's?" he asked.

I said I had.

"You're easy to please, I guess," he remarked. "You've got your arms full of packages, and I've been going every day for the past week and can't find anything that is not either purchasable only by permission of the Government or totally foolish to give."

The lights changed as I agreed that it was difficult to get anything suitable. I did not add that my packages went no further than the point necessary to delight childish hearts. The rest of the 'family,' so far as Awag's were concerned, was out of luck!

We did give presents at Christmas. German friends were more than delighted at a pound of Dutch coffee, a sack of rice from Rumania, and Danish bacon, butter, cheese, and eggs. A box of imported chocolates brought tears to one woman's eyes. She said, "Now my little ones will really have good chocolate to celebrate Christmas with!" What the Nazis allowed to be sold during the holiday season was neither palatable nor more than a few mouthfuls. As extra Christmas allowances Germans received the privilege of buying an extra pound of either dried peas or beans, half a pound of sweets or gingerbread, and three eggs. A minute portion of extra butter was doled out to an eager purchasing public.

Usually at Christmas-time German *Hausfrauen* spend a week doing nothing but baking pies, cakes, and pastries. This past Christmas most homes were lucky if any sweets at all were on the table.

## CHAPTER XIII

### MIKE FLIGHTS

*THIS* is Germany calling with the news in English."

How many times have Englishmen and Americans wondered just who the people are who so unctuously deliver their Nazi versions of the news? Chief broadcasters are Englishmen and Englishwomen.

Perhaps the best-known voice is that of Lord Haw-Haw, as he has been dubbed by the British Press. Haw-Haw in reality is William Joyce, an Englishman who was forced to flee England previous to the outbreak of hostilities.

He was a member of Mosley's Fascist party in England. Seeing an opportunity to enrich himself, he broke away from Mosley's "Blackshirts" and formed a Fascist Nazi Party of his own. In the process he found himself in possession of a considerable number of pounds given by prospective party members. The total became so attractive that Joyce began using the money collected for his own personal expenses. When the time approached for an audit he believed it better that he should leave the country and go to Germany—with what pounds were left.

There are two versions of who is with him. One was given by a Berlin foreign diplomat who claimed that Joyce's wife and child were in South Germany, where they were being treated as interned non-combatants—merely having to report regularly to the German police. It is also rumoured that Joyce, as well as other English persons employed by the German short-wave corporation—"Internationaler Programm-Austausch"—which, of course, is controlled by the Ministry of Propaganda, were receiving money for their support from England through the American Embassy in Berlin.

The other version—and this was told by a member of the German Propaganda Ministry to an Englishman, who in turn unwittingly imparted the information to me—is that an

English girl from Manchester fled with Joyce from London, and is working for the Ministry of Propaganda as a corrector of English wireless manuscripts.

She is known as Mrs Joyce in the Propaganda Ministry and was responsible for a recent mistake that made all England chortle! She allowed a script that went through her hands to go on the air stating, "Late dispatches from the High Command announce that an important British shore base has been torpedoed somewhere in the North Sea!"

Joyce has taken the German name of Frölich, which, translated, means 'joyous.' He is short and marked with a long scar which stretches from his right ear to the corner of his mouth.

Although I was in the wireless station in Berlin as an American broadcasting for an American network for weeks, sometimes twice daily, I never heard Joyce speak anything but German, though it is obvious that he has a poor mastery of the language. He and other foreigners broadcasting for the Reich are disdained by every one at the station, and even are avoided except to discuss technical questions regarding their broadcasts.

Many persons in Berlin supposed that Haw-Haw was Baillie-Stewart, the Guards officer who was imprisoned in the Tower of London. He left England after his sentence had been served—branded as a spy and a traitor. Baillie-Stewart was apprehended shortly before the war. He had delivered certain Tank Corps secret blueprints to German agents.

The ex-Guards officer made daily broadcasts in English for the Nazis from the beginning of the war until January 1, 1940. Then he stopped, ostensibly for the purpose of establishing a film company in South Germany. With him he took a German girl said to be the same person to whom he sold the confidential blueprints. She was believed to have left England at the same time as he did, accompanying him to Germany.

Not long ago a new station began broadcasting German propaganda in English from somewhere in Bavaria. At the present time it still has not been located. In Berlin careful inquiries revealed that Baillie-Stewart has not as yet set up

his film company. He has taken the common German name of von Krause.

Another foreign propaganda broadcaster is John Long, an actor whose stage name is William Trevor. Of all English broadcasters, Long is perhaps the most disliked by Nazi officials. While at the station he makes a constant practice of engaging anyone who will listen to him in long harangues against the Jews, saying that they constituted the main reason why he couldn't stand England.

At the American Express Company's office in Berlin I overheard him state that, no matter what happened, he intended getting five thousand pounds out of England and into Germany.

"Why shouldn't they release it?" he ranted. "It's mine, and I don't owe England anything! My family have been there for more than five hundred years! We've all paid England enough, and I'm going to get those pounds somehow!"

The American Express clerk to whom he was speaking replied quietly, "I'm sorry, Mr Long, but I don't believe you'll be able to, through ordinary channels."

"Just let me get it to Switzerland, and the rest will be easy!" he shouted. The clerk repeated his disbelief that Long would retrieve his money and turned away to another customer.

An American newspaperman, standing within earshot, said audibly, "The dirty son of a bitch!"

Long heard him and stared a moment, then left. I knew the American who had made the comment and walked over to congratulate him. He told me that Long came in nearly every day about that time and raised Cain about his money in England. "I have to drop in for my mail, and he's always here swearing that he'll do this or that. I don't understand why they don't throw him out once in a while!"

The clerk heard our conversation and remarked, "We Germans don't like a traitor any more than anyone else, but that man is protected. We have to be nice!"

German morning news in English is sent over "Sender Bremen" and is delivered by James Royston Clark, another Englishman in Nazi pay. Clark is eighteen or nineteen years

old, and is the son of Mrs T. B. Eckersley, a British subject. Mrs Eckersley edits, writes, and broadcasts herself in Berlin for the Nazis.

At the *Rundfunkhaus*, or wireless station, in Berlin persons of nearly every race and colour give daily propaganda broadcasts. There are several French broadcasters as well as English. The traitor of Stuttgart, Paul Ferdonnet, is on the air every day, continuing to spread Nazi advice and propaganda to the crushed French nation. Ferdonnet, before the French were defeated, was tried and condemned to death by a French military tribunal. That he was absent made no difference. The trial was conducted as if the traitor were present.

At the station the control rooms and offices are always filled with men and women of all types and nationalities. Apart from the American broadcasters, who constantly fight daily wars with the censors in their efforts to report the news accurately, the rest of the foreign broadcasters are allowed to move about as they like, entering the control cabins alone and making their talks without anyone supervising them.

Whenever an American broadcasts a member of the *Rundfunk* staff accompanies him to the studio and sits beside him with a duplicate script in his hand ready to cut him off the air if he deviates from the censored copy, or even accents phrases with too much feeling.

There are two sets of censors—military and those from the Ministry of Propaganda. Amazingly, the military censors—three naval officers—speak little or no English.

After the military censor has passed a script the announcer telephones it through to the Ministry of Propaganda, in English and then in German. If there are objections out comes the blue pencil and whole paragraphs are cut. American broadcasts are usually four minutes long, are intended only for 'spot news' as a rule. If half a page or even a long sentence is eliminated the programme must necessarily run short. This the censors know, yet they persist in dragging out the ordeal until only a few minutes remain before the speaker must begin his broadcast. There usually is not time left to write something else or rewrite what was objectionable. Speakers

are asked to be at the *Rundfunkhaus* two hours before the programme is to go on the air, so that the censoring problem can be overcome in plenty of time.

Although American speakers painstakingly make a point of being at the station two hours before they go on the air, their scripts usually never reach the censor's hands until a bare half-hour before they go on. When something is cut the shortness of time prevents writing new material to take its place.

Often Americans have refused to go on the air because their scripts were handed back five or ten minutes before their broadcasts with so much cut out that their talk would last barely a third of the required time. Warren Irvin, William L. Shirer, and I more than once said flatly that we would not speak with a script unfairly censored—that we refused to broadcast the mere skeleton which was left.

As a rule, when arguments occurred the authorities held out until the last minute and then either an agreement was reached or they let the script through. Amusingly, most of these cuts and arguments arose from quotations from German newspapers—usually the newly established *Warschauer Zeitung*, the Nazi Party organ set up in Warsaw immediately after the Germans invaded the city.

Other differences frequently came up from the speeches of Party leaders. Dr Ley, the Nazi labour leader, was always good for startling quotations. Our argument was: If it was broadcast to Germans or written by him for general consumption why couldn't we put it on the air? Ley embarrassed the Nazi Press more than once with his statements. Often when he wrote articles for Berlin newspapers they would appear in the first editions and then be deleted from later issues of the papers during the day.

One such example was when Ley opened the Mother Exhibition of the *Frauenwerk* in Berlin. In his speech the rotund labour leader asserted that Adolf Hitler was the greatest man ever to have been born, that he came from his mother's womb to save the world—phrases directly out of the Bible referring to Christ. The newspapers published the text of the address in their first editions and left it out of others following.

After long argument I was allowed to quote from the speech that afternoon on the air to America. It made a good broadcast, one that exemplified Nazi misguidance and brought home to Americans the character of one of Germany's foremost advocates of National Socialism.

The *Rundfunkhaus* is guarded by a contingent of Himmler's S.S. men, who wear special brass gorgets slung round their necks. Whenever anyone goes from one room to another these guards insist upon seeing his permit to be in the building.

The control cabins are outside in a portable wooden building. When I asked an announcer employed at the station whether any preparations had been made in case of an air raid he said, "You'd be surprised! I can't tell you, but be assured that nothing has been overlooked."

"But there seem to be no underground cellars or air raid shelters to continue the broadcasting if the station were destroyed," I said.

"I can't say anything about that," he countered, "but there's no doubt that we are better prepared to carry on if what you see here is all levelled to the ground than the English are with all their publicized precautions."

The British had announced a week or so before this that all their printing facilities and broadcasting equipment were duplicated beneath the earth.

The only visible proof of his statements was a sign on another building next door which said that a public air raid shelter was there. The wooden buildings house all the important equipment for sending and recording broadcasts. Perhaps a vast network of cellars is beneath the whole works, but its existence is a guarded secret—if it is there at all.

The Germans make every effort to enrol interned Englishmen who might be used as propaganda broadcasters. One Britisher told me that he had been interned and let out on the tacit understanding that he would have to do something for Germany if he wanted to keep his freedom. He said that he had accepted the release from the camp where he was interned, but had firmly stated that he would do nothing for Germany.

He explained, "One man in the Propaganda Ministry said that I was a fool, but to enjoy my freedom for a while. After a bit of it, he insisted, I should be willing to come round to their way of thinking and broadcast for them. Then I'd have to make my decision whether I'd co-operate or go back! I've decided to tell them I'll go back regardless of what they may offer, rather than do anything to help the Nazis," he concluded.

Meanwhile this man does not know at what hour of the day or night he might be on the way back to internment.

Despite their intense efforts to do things properly the Nazis still find most efforts difficult. This situation is not true in the Army, but civil administration certainly is not a model of efficiency. An incident that occurred to Russell Hill, C.B.S. broadcaster, in the Berlin *Rundfunkhaus* is typical.

Just after the director of programmes had finished telling him that Germans always had the knack of doing things correctly and with the greatest efficiency, both looked at the clock in the director's office to see how much time Hill had before his broadcast. There seemed to be enough time—five minutes—as the studios were near by. The director and Hill walked slowly to the control rooms and then suddenly broke into a frantic run. The big control clocks showed that the clock in the director's office was five minutes slow!

Hill missed his broadcast. The director stared blankly for a moment and then said, "It's impossible that this could have happened!"

The American replied with feeling, but the 'spot' had been lost because the director's clock was incorrect.

One of the main questions Englishmen asked me when I came out of Germany was whether British propaganda broadcasts were listened to in Germany. Since the war began penalties for listening to any foreign broadcast in the Reich have been severe.

One true story broadly illustrates how Germans regard the laws regarding this.

In a small town in North Germany a family received official news that their son was dead. He was a sailor on a U-boat. His mother and relatives were filled with grief, and,



being Catholics, ordered a Mass for the deceased boy immediately after they received the news.

While the mother was mourning alone previous to the Mass the local butcher appeared at the house and begged to see her. Servants and relatives told the caller that in the circumstances it was hardly likely that she would wish to see anyone, no matter how important the visit might be.

But the butcher persisted and finally was admitted to see the brokenhearted mother. Shortly afterwards she emerged from the room with the butcher, a beaming smile on her face. Then she mysteriously asked again to be left alone to thank God.

A few minutes later the village tailor asked to see the bereaved mother in the same insistent tone. The same thing happened, the mother seeing her caller to the door and then going back to her room with a happy face. Within the next hour four tradesmen and other friends called.

At last the mother could no longer contain herself and called the family together. In hushed tones she told them that all the people who had insisted on seeing her alone had reported that they had heard over the B.B.C. that her son had been captured when the submarine he was aboard was disabled by a British destroyer and the German crew taken prisoner. The boy's name had been mentioned as being among those saved, and therefore she had been thanking God all the afternoon for the wonderful deliverance of her son and for the kindness of the villagers who risked their lives to tell her.

Now remained the problem of the Mass already ordered. It could not be cancelled, for if this were done the Nazi authorities in the town would become suspicious. Her informants might be tried and executed.

After a lengthy secret consultation with the members of the family it was decided to go through with the religious ceremonies.

However, a number of messages were carried by hand to those who had taken great chances when they told her what they had heard over the forbidden foreign station.

At the church the whole ceremony took place as scheduled,

with the mother wearing a thick black veil to hide her smiles. Afterwards the friends who had called in the morning all met at the house of the mother, and a large champagne party was held behind closed doors and shuttered windows.

The persons who had informed the family of the boy's safety took tremendous risks. The usual sentence simply for listening to a foreign broadcast is three to six years' hard labour. If the culprit is discovered repeating what he has heard to anyone the special courts can declare the death sentence. The best that can be expected in such cases is twelve to twenty years' hard labour.

The Nazis go to extremes in enforcing the wireless laws. In several instances death sentences have been imposed because sets were tuned to foreign stations, even though the family was not at home and knew nothing about it. Whether an enemy had gained entrance to their rooms, as claimed, and turned on the set was considered irrelevant.

Another luckless man explained that his small children unknowingly had tuned the set to a foreign station in his absence. It made no difference. The point was that the forbidden station was heard. No accusation was made that he had listened in. The *prima facie* evidence was all that was necessary. The set broadcast foreign news to the neighbourhood, or at least to the next-door neighbours, and he was responsible.

Germans have a new phrase which they mention whenever they are in public places and want to discuss what they have secretly listened to the night before from the B.B.C. or other tabooed foreign wavelengths.

"I dreamed that such and such happened" is heard all over Germany.

"That's funny," is the usual answer; "I dreamed that too!" The dream referred to is the English news which has been heard with wireless sets turned down low, or with earphones. 'Dreamers' apparently listen in regularly to the B.B.C. from the number of times I heard the phrase spoken in confidence.

German military censors delight in being what they call "carefully punctilious" while carrying out their duties at the

wireless station. The ardour with which they apply this is shown in an incident concerning a long Christmas shopping broadcast made by Miss Schultz a few days before December 25. The script contained a description of a toy gun that was then on sale in most Berlin toy-shops. She had noticed the gun and admired its accurate likeness to the real thing. Naturally its mechanism, while cleverly devised, was nothing like the grim counterpart from which it was copied.

To fill time Miss Schultz had asked me to write a couple of pages on the gun, pointing out the accuracy with which German toymakers aped the genuine weapon. It was an 88-millimetre anti-aircraft gun which could be elevated, traversed, and sighted by tiny wheels and levers attached to the carriage of the piece.

I described all this, remarking on the delicate handwork that had been put into the making of the toy.

The censors threw up their hands in horror when the script was placed before them.

"Where did you get this information?" they demanded suspiciously.

When they were told that the contents of this part of the script described what actually had been seen in Berlin toy-shops they frowned deeply and cut out the entire description. Miss Schultz asked if it was not possible in replacing the lost copy to say that the broadcast had contained the description, but that the German plaything had been so well made and resembled the real thing to such an extent that its appearance could not be described over the air. The request was refused.

Two days after this I used the entire story; it passed the censors without a word of comment. Later I discovered that the military censorship bureau had instigated an investigation of all toy manufacturers on the basis that their products were too realistic, and that it was possible that military secrets might be given away in the small replicas.

To crown the matter the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* printed an article from its New York correspondent a few days later bemoaning the fact that American toyshops were displaying "warlike toys" for children of a "peaceful nation"!

Military censors are supposed only to cut what might consist of "purely military information." At the beginning of the war they stuck to this principle, allowing the Ministry of Propaganda to decide upon the political contents of scripts. Then the head military censor at the wireless station, a Kapitän Petzel, began to get political ambitions. Repeatedly he made special trips into the *sanctum sanctorum* of the station director to ask American broadcasters, "Why do you say this? It's not what I'd think was friendly to Germany." When politely asked to stick to his last he would stamp pompously out, his mouth full of mumbled objections and complaints. All of us were heartily sick of his constant interference.

Finally he came upon a word I had used four times previously in an American sense without intention of offending. No comment had been made by the regular Propaganda censors when the word had been used in the past. In wireless parlance, I had called Goebbels the "diminutive Propaganda Minister"—just as we might name Joe Louis the "Brown Bomber."

Here was something Petzel could well use to his own advantage. He blew into the room where I was waiting to get my script back officially approved by the military. His face was a gorgeous scarlet. He drew himself up to stiff attention and stated with clipped formality that he, as an officer of Adolf Hitler, could not censor or even consider looking at any script that described Goebbels as "diminutive."

Petzel's appearance was ludicrous. Despite the seriousness of the situation it was all I could do to prevent a broad grin. His pomposity and ramrod figure, as well as his outraged tone, were funny—something out of a Mack Sennet comedy!

After a long and bitter argument I finally convinced other Germans present that calling Goebbels diminutive was not a personal slur, but rather a Yankee trick of humanizing wireless commentating. I insisted that no offence was meant.

A German announcer, no friend of mine and an ardent Nazi, joined with the Kapitän in berating me, swearing that an insult was intended. That the phrase had been 'phoned to the Ministry of Propaganda and translated into German

four times before was ignored. My descriptive adjective concerning Goebbels was cut out of the script.

But that was not all. An entire page was eliminated by the officer. He claimed that I had mentioned the wrong war report in quoting the High Command's *communiqué*—that I was a day out in my comment. I knew he was mistaken, as I had taken the *communiqué* from that evening's paper, but he would not listen. Out went the whole page, with the Kapitän stalking from the room. I was on the spot. I knew the *communiqué* was correctly quoted, yet he would not admit his error, whether intentional or not. That Sunday evening I was short a full minute and a half.

A day or so after this I was on the carpet before a high official of the broadcasting section of the Ministry of Propaganda. The interview was rather silly. I had to promise that I would be a good boy from that time on, and was told that if I was not more careful in what I wrote I should be "punished severely" and that "more stringent means" would be taken to impress upon me the privilege I retained in remaining within the Reich. I was Germany's guest, and should realize my position. That was the tenor of the reprimand. When I mentioned that I wanted to state my side of the affair and pointed out that the phrase about Goebbels had been passed four times the high official said, "I know nothing of this; there must be a mistake!"

I offered to produce the scripts, also saying that his department had three copies of everything I had said on the air for weeks back. (The *Rundfunkhaus* demanded six copies of every broadcast for its own files—three for its own use, two for the Ministry files, and the last for Goebbels himself!) The official stared a moment, and then abruptly stated that the interview was at an end. I had had my warning, and that would be all! I was, however, reinstated.

I learned from a reliable source that Kapitän Petzel had good reasons for despising Goebbels and that he wasted little love on him. There had been certain incidents concerning the Kapitän and the Propaganda Minister in the past that had implanted the strongest dislike for Germany's Number One Propagandist in Petzel's heart. However, the lure of a

soft political post was too much temptation for the naval officer, and his seizing upon my nomenclature of Goebbels was a fine opportunity to aggrandize himself as a loyal supporter of National Socialism. Whether he ever achieved his cherished ambition I don't know, but I was informed that the whole matter was nicely staged by the Kapitän and that he was complimented for his party loyalty and support of his secret arch-enemy, Joseph Goebbels.

The power that the Nazis wield over small neutrals is apparent through their frequent appearances in the *Rundfunkhaus*. Balkan newsmen often go to the wireless station directly from Press conferences for the purpose of broadcasting prepared scripts—written in the Ministry of Propaganda—to their countrymen. These broadcasts naturally distort facts and sway opinion to Germany's side. It is cold fact that a number of neutral correspondents receive money and good will from the Nazis by co-operating with them in the writing of their versions of current news and by broadcasting National Socialist propaganda.

A few who have more conscience say behind closed doors that if they didn't accept the Nazi offers they'd have to go home, as they are not paid enough by their papers to live in expensive Berlin, besides having orders to stay "in the good graces" of "mighty Germany."

P.K. units, or propaganda detachments from the Army, co-operate with the wireless to a great extent. These soldier-reporters, drawn from the ranks and usually ex-newspapermen, prepare regular daily broadcasts from what is claimed to be the front lines. Though the men are still soldiers commanded by Army officers and wearing uniforms, they are directed from the Ministry of Propaganda.

Their job has been to popularize the war by writing or broadcasting thrilling accounts of aeroplane flights, bombing raids, and sea battles. They are alleged to broadcast from the scene of action.

Sometimes a 'show' is broadcast from a "Flak," or anti-aircraft battery, on the coast or from a battleship. During the campaign in France one such propaganda broadcast was said to have been sent out from an actual raiding party, but

technical arrangements could hardly accomplish such a feat. Microphone and equipment could not be used in the midst of a trench raid.

The purpose of the 'show,' however, was far from lost. Intended for internal consumption, these P.K. broadcasts have gained a wide popularity in the Reich. They are thrilling, combining all the expectancy of the Wild West type of entertainment with the impression that what happens is actuality.

Another kind of broadcast has occasionally been prepared for the rest of the world over the short-wave facilities of the State wireless stations. "Life in Berlin," was a series of three fifteen-minute 'shows' in which two men, one a German, the other a visiting Italian friend, went the rounds of Berlin night life. The broadcasts were so poorly done that sound effects such as the background noises at the opera and in night-clubs often drowned the actors. One place visited in the broadcasts was an Italian restaurant popular among the listeners—actually supposed to be the *Taverne*. The two men ate the entire time while supposed to be at this night-club talking of all the delicious food they were having.

The cuisine at the *Taverne*, as I have said, used to be excellent, but at the time of the broadcasts it was little better than most other places in Berlin. The production of the programme was poorly done from every angle. The entertainment value was smothered in constant conversation about food; and while this may impress Germans as epitomizing the plentiful supplies in the Reich, it must have bored the rest of the world—at least that part of it that has enough to eat! And it was to the United States the broadcast was directed.

The *Rundfunkhaus* is in the Kaiserdamm, on the edge of Adolf Hitler Platz, which was formerly christened Mussolini Platz, but changed to the Führer's name when Italy was tardy about entering the war. Now it may have again been changed. The *Kurzwellsender*, or shortwave station, is a drab red-brick building flanked by rows of wooden, portable sheds that house the transmitting equipment and controls. The interiors of the buildings are dull white and brown. This colour scheme

is dear to the hearts of Nazis, and most official offices are so decorated, the brown coming waist-high, the white stretching to the ceiling. All offices contain beds, where executives and announcers sometimes are able to snatch a few minutes' rest when the pressure of work keeps them at the station.

The first few weeks of the war kept the whole staff on duty most of the time. The station was frantically adjusting itself to war conditions, and many of the employees seldom got home at all. Workers of Adolf Hitler are available for service to the Reich twenty-four hours a day, and are expected to put that much time in if necessary. The Führer decreed this working-hour standard years ago as one of the main principles of National Socialism.

The Germans try every method short of actual violence to try to influence American broadcasters. Not long ago William L. Shirer, C.B.S. commentator, received an unsigned note on regular official Ministry of Propaganda stationery. The contents of the note threatened that his tone of voice and inflexion were highly detrimental to the Reich. Bill is particularly clever in his broadcasts, writing phrases that read beyond criticism as far as censors are concerned. But the way he says them underlines many other meanings. Scorn, sarcasm, and his tongue in his cheek when he feels it necessary are frequently obvious in the way he reads a quotation from a speech or states what an official newspaper has said about some current event in Germany.

The unsigned warning stated that Bill had better be careful, that it was not what his script said that was objectionable, but how he read it. He took the note to the director of the wireless station and asked, "What's the matter? Is the man that wrote this afraid to sign his name?" The director refused to comment except to repeat the warning and declare that the note came from "the highest places." Bill, however, has not changed his style and loses no opportunity to flaunt the message in front of Nazis, asking why the person that wrote it would not affix his signature.

The day before Christmas, Max Jordan told me that I had been assigned to a broadcast in Bayreuth on Christmas Eve. A group of evacuated children from Saarbrücken and the



surrounding Siegfried Line areas were to sing Christmas carols. Other groups in England and France of similar unfortunate youngsters were to be part of the programme. These, too, were to sing the season's carols in their own language.

Max told me that I should have to run the whole show myself—that a German engineer would be on hand, but that all the rehearsing and arrangements would be up to me. Originally it had been planned that I should accompany Max to the West Wall, where he was to make a broadcast from a fortified bunker in the front lines. I had looked forward to this for some time, seeing not only the value of shows from there—I was to do one or two—but the scoop the *Chicago Tribune* would get, as no other correspondents would be there and the Siegfried Line had not been visited by correspondents for some months.

At the last moment, however, the High Command put its foot down and would allow only Max to go. So, swallowing my disappointment, I contemplated the trip to Bayreuth. A little thought on the subject brought grave doubts. I had no fear for myself. The script could be written, approved, and delivered without any qualms.

But the management of a hundred or more children, the incursions of an organ, and the timing worried me considerably. I was in the rôle of announcer, producer, sound engineer, and stage director—all this for an international broadcast. Add the facts that my German was not too good, and that there would be no translators on hand, and you have some idea of how I felt. Previously all my shows had been fairly simple. I wrote the script and went out to the station and read into a microphone. All engineering difficulties and channel selections as well as modulation were ably attended to.

In Bayreuth all this would fall on my shoulders. To complicate matters, the German broadcast was to come between one from France and another from England. That meant that accurate timing was vital. If I didn't start and end on the second, American audiences would be hearing a jumbled mess of either French and German, or German and English—and possibly different songs at once.

Further, it meant that Christmas Eve and Christmas

Day would be spent chiefly on the train from Berlin to Bayreuth.

I wrote the script and got the censors' approval. It was necessary, the director of the wireless station informed me, to mention that there was a large Christmas-tree round which the children would gather to sing carols, that there would be plenty of cakes and sweets, as well as presents for all, and—this last a distinct shock—a three-year-old German girl would greet American children in German and would have to be coached!

He handed me what she would say, and promised that the youngster would have learned it by heart before I got there. Besides my other troubles, I now had a three-year-old to break into broadcasting! I never dared think of mike fright myself, and how a small child would react seemed a definite hazard.

At Bayreuth, after an uncomfortable train trip through blacked-out Germany with my compartment in darkness most of the time, I met the German engineer who was to attend to the technicalities of the programme. He had never directed a show before, knew only how to plug in the right plugs and contact Berlin. He spoke no English and had an impossible Bavarian accent. I understood about every tenth word. I could see that he would be no help. From a technical point of view he probably was excellent; but that was a small part of the show, I thought then!

We went to a large hall, a local Nazi headquarters meeting-house, where the Sender Bayreuth was located. Bayreuth makes one group of international broadcasts a year—that of the Wagnerian Festival. The engineer had no sooner looked at the equipment than he hurried to me and indicated that there was some doubt whether he could put it in shape in time.

"Go ahead and try," I pleaded.

With this possibility on my mind I began marshalling the hundred and more children into some semblance of a circle for rehearsal. Their ages ranged from three to twelve. Any large group of children is difficult to handle, particularly if they have had no wireless experience. These were not an

exception, though their behaviour on the whole was good. We had a scant forty-five minutes to rehearse before the scheduled time.

There were a few who cried lustily. Before one song was finished there were three fights and a fall—a little tot toppled off the stage into a box of fir branches kept at the hall for Nazi mass meetings.

I had a stop-watch. Several times the seven-minute programme began for timing purposes. Half-way through the children's singing-master would interrupt and insist that a song should be repeated. His interference ruined all attempts at timing the show properly until the last minute.

Finally the full time was rehearsed without an interruption. The little girl who was to greet American children said her piece nicely. The carols were well sung. The organ, which boomed in the background during *O Tannenbaum*, the final selection, blended in satisfactorily.

The sound engineer signalled to me that all was well, that his equipment had been put into shape, and that Berlin was ready to rebroadcast the programme *via* short wave to America.

With five minutes to go, the stage was quiet. Suddenly there came a sound of wild sobbing from under my feet. The little girl who was to speak had lost her nerve completely. With the clock ticking steadily on, a substitute was found from among the children. There was no time to rehearse the new little girl. I prayed a short prayer that she wouldn't start to cry, and again held up my hand for silence. A minute was left now.

Presently I got the signal from the engineer. The green pilot light on the mike turned to red. We were on the air.

With my stop-watch in one hand and the script in the other I began my introduction. The children shuffled nervously behind me. I fancied I heard a stifled sob. If that was the substitute child losing her nerve the whole show would go to pieces. For propaganda purposes children crying from Germany on Christmas Eve would be swell stuff as far as America was concerned. The Nazis would love it. At the same time there might be considerable trouble at home over such an incident. American broadcasters and special shows

from Europe did not include overt expressions of sympathy for the belligerents.

Since then there have been programmes that have effected this, but none have come from Germany; if they had the network would have received a storm of irate letters and dozens of accusations about N.B.C.'s "Nazi Americans" on the air from the Reich. Which would be me!

My 'intro' and the first two songs went off well. Then the little girl was lifted up to the mike. She swallowed twice and looked at me. Forcing a friendly smile—by now I was scared to death at what her reactions might be—I motioned her to begin.

Her recital of the short paragraph was funny. She had learned it by heart, and sang each sentence out just as she had learned it—in jerky, parrot-like style. The effect was good. The rest of the programme went off equally well. The songs were well done, and the timing exact to the second. Berlin telephoned through immediately to say that the show had been a great success. The *Rundfunk* was pleased. I began to feel that I had had luck on my side, and my first experience as an announcer, commentator, producer, and director, all in one, was as professionally carried off as any big New York show.

Berlin said that conditions over the Atlantic were splendid, that the show must have been received very clearly at home. More compliments came from friends in Berlin by 'phone. Recordings had been made during the broadcast. It was to be repeated for German internal consumption, with a translator following my opening and closing comments.

Pride certainly goeth before a fall! When I got back to Berlin a cable from N.B.C. awaited me. My programme had not been heard. Some engineer at home had mistaken the short-wave station channel which the show was supposed to have had. All my effort and worry had gone into thin air, and come out nowhere but in Berlin!

The children received a small package. In it were two cakes, some sweets, and a cheap toy. The little girl greeting America—her speech, of course, was prepared by the Ministry of Propaganda—had said that she and her friends were standing

in front of an enormous Christmas-tree, that they were very happy because of all the nice sweets, gifts, and gingerbread they had been given. There was plenty for all, she added, and then sent her best holiday wishes to American children and their parents. Her speech ended, "And have you as much as we for Christmas at your house?"

There was no Christmas-tree, hardly what she had termed "plenty for all," and the toys and food were on a canary-ration scale. Her final ironic remark capped the climax. Did little American children have as much? The poor youngster, thin-faced and half starved, had no idea of what she was saying, nor cared. Regimented as they were, obedience was completely natural.

Her parents were there. I gave them five marks, and the child fifty pfennigs. The father and mother showed their gratefulness, not only in fervent thanks, but in open tears which rolled down their faces freely. The man said that it was more than he had had in his pocket since he had been forced to leave Saarbrücken. The little girl was utterly dumb-founded by her present of fifty pfennigs—about ninepence. She said that no little girl of her age she knew among the evacuees had so great a fortune. She was four.

The authorities had seen me give the money to the child and her parents. I was told that I had made a mistake. "These people serve Adolf Hitler; and when they are told to do something by the Reich they do it without payment from *Ausländer*!" said one brown-shirted Storm Trooper. I had wanted to give the child something, as well as her parents, but suspected that this might happen, so made my gifts modest. Before I left Bayreuth the engineer told me that he had heard that my presents had been donated to the Party chest.

The fate of evacuees from the war areas of the Siegfried Line is not a pleasant one. They were shipped off to strange surroundings and are finding it hard to adjust themselves to new environments. By now some may be returning, but their life since the beginning of the war has been exceedingly difficult.

In Bayreuth three thousand of these refugees from the battlefields are billeted in the homes of the populace. They

are not welcome guests. Bayreuth has a population of twenty-eight thousand souls. This means that one out of approximately every ten families must accept a group of newcomers whether they like it or not.

Naturally, though Nazis try to cover the fact, there is resentment on both sides. The refugees feel that they ought to be treated more fairly, saying that it was not their wish to come to Bayreuth. Their hosts believe they are doing more than their share in providing food and shelter.

Rent is paid, but the very small income the refugee is able to earn allows so little that it hardly compensates for what he receives. One man who has taken in an entire family of four said, "All that these people can pay is twenty pfennigs a day for breakfast and a few coppers to help buy winter fuel."

The men have work to do ; but its importance is necessarily small, as the good jobs are all held by those who have always lived in Bayreuth. There is much bitterness among the women who have had to leave homes they have lived in for generations. A housewife told me that it was extremely hard to swallow pride. "You see," she asserted, "in Saarbrücken my man and I had a fine grocery shop and never lacked for anything. Now that is all gone and we've got to live on charity—something we've never done in all our lives !"

Nazi Party men closely supervise every activity of the evacuees. Any sign of dissatisfaction is, as one Storm Trooper put it, "dealt with promptly." This supervision has turned feelings of rebellion into complete resignation, with the sole remaining hope that the war will be over quickly, so that every one can go back to his home.

Some of the refugees guardedly admitted that they had grave apprehensions as to what may have happened to their homes and possessions left behind.

"We've heard many stories of plundering in the fortified areas," said an elderly man who was considered well off when he lived on his ample farm near Zweibrücken. "However, we had a suspicion when we had to leave that our property would not be respected," he concluded.

Without exception the refugees all expect to go back to

their homes and "start life anew," as one woman said. Her attitude indicated that taking up where she had left off was very unlikely. "Everything will be different," she prophesied.

The plight of the evacuated children is pitiful. They cannot understand why they have been torn away from familiar surroundings. Their new Bayreuth companions apparently do not let them forget the fact that they were not wanted in the first place, and that they are objects of charity.

The adjustment has been very trying, a mother stated. She bemoaned the situation that now she was unable to give her little girl all the milk she needed. "The child is not too strong," she explained. "At home we had a cow. There I could give her all the body-building foods she must have to keep well. Here I can give her practically nothing! War is war," she added sadly, "but it's terrible that little children have to suffer as well as every one else!"

Bayreuth Nazis claim that no food problem presents itself because of extra mouths to feed. "There's plenty of food for all," said an official, "but naturally it's not the same as would be available in normal times." Several evacuees had another story to tell. They say that they receive mere scraps after the families with whom they live have finished their meals. As their resources are slender they cannot demand more. Everything depends upon the type of persons they went to when billeting orders were first issued. To effect a move to better conditions arouses suspicion and the displeasure of the authorities.

"Everybody is striving for an understanding," claimed a Bayreuth city deputy, "and eventually it will come, but it isn't an easy matter to satisfy all parties concerned."

On Christmas Eve at twelve o'clock I sat in the Nuremberg railway-station waiting for my connexion to Berlin. In the big first- and second-class restaurant I observed what I felt to be a fair cross-section of German life and the German people. Men and women walked past, their faces haggard after long train journeys. Others sat dully, thumbing the pages of magazines or staring at the steady stream of people pushing in and out of the restaurant's swinging doors.

Soldiers and airmen were everywhere. A fat, elderly

lieutenant entered the room and passed from uniform to uniform examining 'leave papers' and identifications. The soldiers silently resented his official curiosity. Though he was wished a merry Christmas a dozen times round the room by the men, he never replied in kind but left with a formal salute, his eyes straight ahead. The gesture was not for the soldiers' benefit, but was a military regulation. That it might be accompanied by a holiday wish of good health and happiness, for him, was impossible !

The soldiers themselves looked very human, as soldiers on leave during war-time in any country will. They became individuals, scratched at their tight uniforms, slipped the heels of their boots off a little, unbuttoned a collar, and smoked and swore jovially. Single men sitting apart from others in grey-green were quiet, usually ignoring a newspaper stuck in their belt or lying on the table. A glass of beer usually stood before them, was sipped frugally from time to time. The expressions on their faces were either of fatigue or of wistful gazing into space. Perhaps they wondered what it would be like to be home again if they were coming away from the front, or speculated on what lay before them if they were going back to the Siegfried Line.

Older men in brown Storm Trooper uniforms dotted the restaurant. Late at night, and away from their firesides on Christmas Eve, they looked a little foolish, as if their regalia and medals didn't mean half so much as would their carpet slippers and their meerschaums. In their homes their children were asleep, dreaming of the morrow's gifts that Kriss Kringle—that is, their Party-loyal, usually uniformed father—would bring.

Women sat undisturbed in the man-filled atmosphere. No one molested them. They read books or dismally fingered a glass. From time to time every one would stare at the station clock as it jerked its minute hand towards another hour each sixty seconds.

The waiters moved among the crowd, their arms supporting vast trays of beers. They banged them down in front of guests as if they were stones to be tossed into a pond, the resultant ripples meaning nothing. They were, perhaps, the



most truly human, everyday element in the room. Dreams, wonderment, and nostalgia on Christmas Eve might be the lot of the majority of their customers, but demand, supply, and delivery governed their thoughts and movements. Working hard, trying to remember numerous orders, and stamping about the place with their overloaded trays humanized them to a happier level than the rest. They had no time to think.

But I, in that long moment of waiting, let my thoughts wander back to those earliest Berlin blackouts, to Gdynia and the booming of the *Schleswig-Holstein*, to the agony of Warsaw, to Prague and the statue of King Wenceslaus draped with black. I thought of the ignominy of the Czech nation and of the dauntless spirit of its people, destined some day to rise in an unquenchable and consuming flame. And I thought of the fear and the hunger of soul and body among the conquering Germans and the subjection of their wills to the power of hate and of brute force.

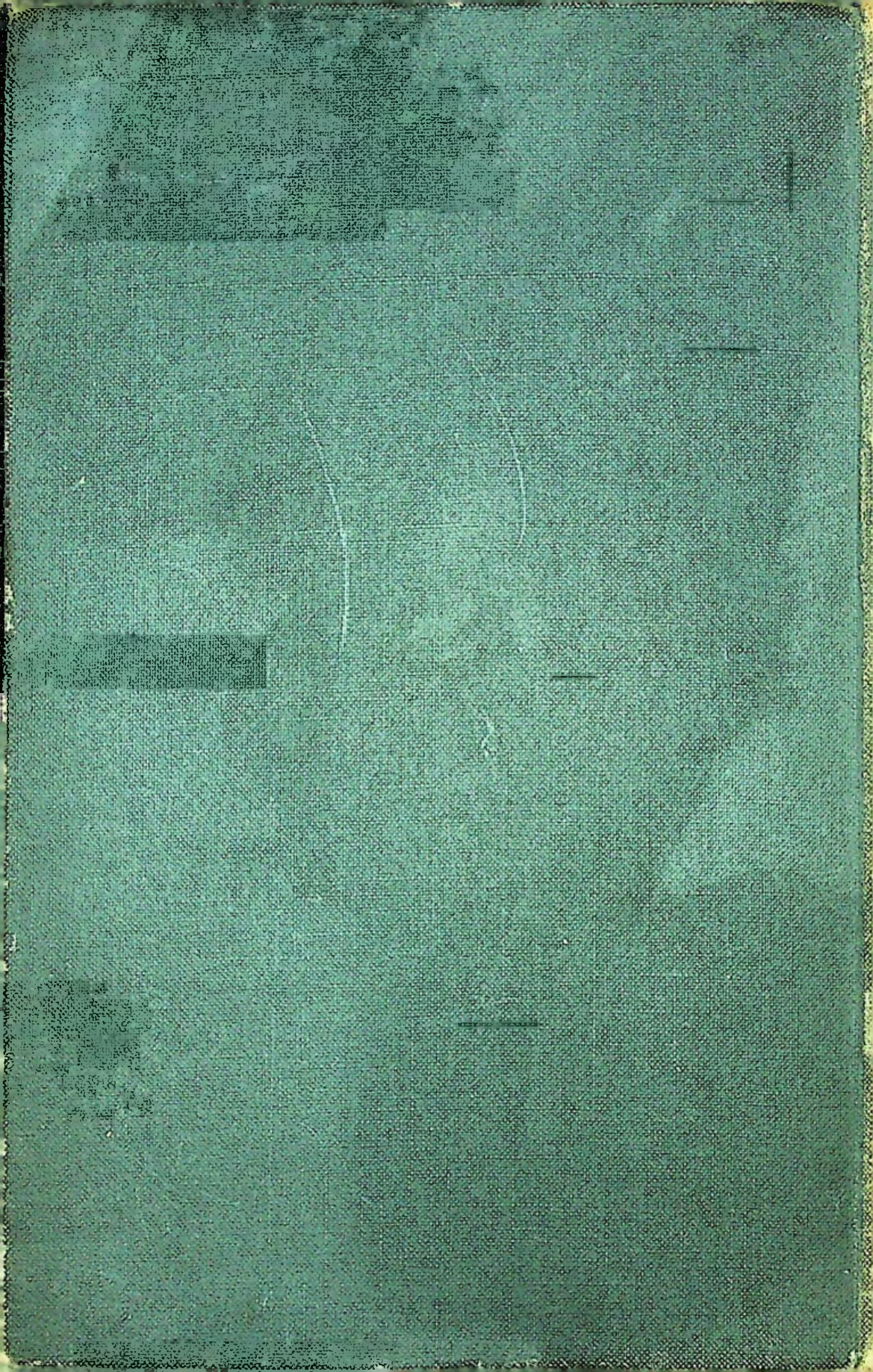
They say that a railway-station can tell the story of a nation. In Nuremberg that night my impression of the Germans was one of sadness—one of the greatest pity. They had been caught in a net of their own making, and their thousand sorrows wound it all the tighter about their aching hearts.





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BEHIND  
THE  
NAZI  
FRONT  
5  
RALEIGH

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HARRAR